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**Testimony in Opposition to Senate Bill 333
Amending the Jason Flatt Act**

**Presented to the Senate Education Committee
By Kansas Attorney General Derek Schmidt**

February 8, 2018

Chairwoman Baumgardner and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony in opposition to Senate Bill 333. This bill, in my opinion, would make harmful changes to an important law that several of us, including myself, fought hard to enact just two years ago to help prevent youth suicides.

In 2016, our office worked closely with the Jason Foundation and the Kansas State Department of Education to bring the Jason Flatt Act to Kansas. This law requires all personnel who work in schools to receive training on identifying the signs of at-risk youth who may be susceptible to suicide. I have attached a copy of my testimony from 2016 when this bill was heard in the House Education Committee to give more background on the underlying legislation.

The bill before you today would significantly weaken the requirements on school districts by restricting who is to be trained and the length of that training. It does not strike me as a wise policy decision to lessen the requirements for training on suicide prevention during a time when the data compiled by the State Child Death Review Board indicates that suicide deaths among our young people are on the rise.

I would ask that you also carefully consider the testimony submitted by the Director of the Victims Services Division in the attorney general's office, Dorthy Stucky Halley, whose personal and professional experience also support continuing these training requirements for all school personnel.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

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