



**Representative Susan Manchester**  
**78th House District**  
**House Homeland Security Committee**  
**House Bill 248 Sponsor Testimony**  
**Create the suicide prevention license plate**  
**November 28<sup>th</sup> 2023**

Chair Ghanbari, Vice Chair Plummer, Ranking Member Thomas and members of the House Homeland Security Committee, thank you for the opportunity to give sponsor testimony regarding House Bill 248. House Bill 248 would create a specialized license plate dedicated to suicide prevention awareness. In July 2022, the new National Suicide Crisis Hotline 988 became operational across the state of Ohio. Since then, Ohio has experienced an average of 10,000 calls, chats, and text messages a month to the hotline. 80% of these calls are able to be stabilized without needing emergency response services, relieving the strain on 911, first responders, and hospitals.

This license plate initiative is reinforced by the alarming and widespread impact of suicide on our communities. According to the Ohio Department of Health:

- Suicide is the second leading cause of death for ages 10 to 24, and tragically, the leading cause of death for ages 10 to 14.
- Nearly 80% of Ohio's suicides occur among 35 to 65 year-old adults, with the highest rate being those older than 75. This broad demographic requires a comprehensive approach of prevention and awareness.
- Finally, Ohio loses an average of 5 people every day to suicide, making it a pervasive and pressing public health issue affecting all communities in our state.

The Ohio Suicide Prevention Foundation (OSPF) plays a crucial role in addressing this issue. OSPF is a non-profit organization committed to preventing suicide through

collaboration with providers, educators, loss survivors, local groups, health plans, public and private partners, and families across the state.

The purpose of having 988 and OSPF on license plates on cars across Ohio is twofold:

- It will help spread a message of hope and healing to communities, reminding people that help is available by simply calling 988.
- Importantly, 100% of the funds raised by this license plate will stay in Ohio to support suicide prevention efforts across the state.

I urge your support for the Suicide Prevention License Plate bill, a tangible step toward a safer and more compassionate Ohio. Mr. Chairman, members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to speak to this important legislation. I am happy to answer any questions.