

May 16, 2023

To Whom It May Concern,

I am submitting this letter in support of House Bill 7858. It is my strong belief that we are in urgent need of safety barriers on the Mount Hope, Claiborne Pell, Sakonnet and Jamestown Verrazzano bridges to reduce the opportunity of people using these bridges to take their lives. There has been a 86-100% reduction in suicides in communities that have installed bridge barriers. (SUICIDE PREVENTION ON BRIDGES: THE NATIONAL SUICIDE PREVENTION LIFELINE POSITION John Draper, Ph.D., Director, National Suicide Prevention Lifeline Revised January 2017 (original 2008). We need a bridge to reduce or hopefully eliminate the tragedies that are all too common in our community.

I am deeply saddened to know that so many people are in such pain that they want to end their life. By eliminating this one lethal option of ending one's life there is more chance to connect people with resources that can help them cope with the problems and challenges that they face which make them feel that life is not worth living. One death by suicide is too many – we have the opportunity to save multiple lives by installing bridge barriers and action is needed now, not waiting for another year and many more lives lost.

Please take action now.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "E Pearce-Spence". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long horizontal line extending from the end of the name.

Emily Pearce-Spence  
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