

2024-22

THE TOWN OF MIDDLETOWN

RESOLUTION OF THE COUNCIL URGING THE RHODE ISLAND STATE  
LEGISLATURE TO SUPPORT ALLOCATING FUNDING FOR PERMANENT SAFETY  
BARRIERS ON RHODE ISLAND'S BRIDGES OVER NARRAGANSETT BAY

- WHEREAS: The Town of Middletown recognizes that any and all suicides are devastating and extend our sympathies to our loved ones, family, friends, neighbors, co-workers and communities affected by the loss and,
- WHEREAS: We thank our Middletown first responders for their heroic efforts to save lives including from our bridges over Narragansett Bay and,
- WHEREAS: Suicides from our state's bridges over Narragansett Bay have affected our community since the time the bridges were built and,
- WHEREAS: We seek ways to make our bridges safe from potential suicides and,
- WHEREAS: The barriers erected by the Army Corps of Engineers on the Bourne and Sagamore Bridges have been shown to greatly reduce access to the bridge railings as means for suicide and,
- WHEREAS: Most recently safety netting installed on Florida's Skyway Bridge is showing great promise for reducing suicides from said bridge and,
- WHEREAS: We recognize the railings on the bridges over Narragansett Bay, including the Jamestown, Pell, Sakonnet and Mount Hope bridges do not exceed approximately 42 inches and are not tall enough or designed to keep the public from going over the bridge railing as a means to suicide and,
- WHEREAS: According to statistics from the RI Department of Health from 2012 - 2021 there were 1,199 suicides in Rhode Island of which 54 were bridge related suicides and of those 29 were bridge related suicides from bridges in Newport County and,
- WHEREAS: In recent years the RI General Assembly appropriated funding to the RI Turnpike and Bridge Authority for engineering studies for the Jamestown and Mount Hope and the Pell and Sakonnet but we need to make the installation of safety barriers a reality on all four bridges.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT

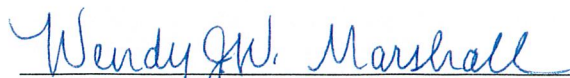
- RESOLVED: That the Middletown Town Council urges the Rhode Island Senate and House Finance Committees and the Rhode Island General Assembly to support the legislative efforts to immediately and once and for all install suicide prevention safety barriers on Rhode Island's bridges over Narragansett Bay.

BE IT FURTHER

- RESOLVED: That the Town Clerk, no later than 30 days after passage of this Resolution, shall transmit copies of this resolution to the President and Vice President of the United States, to the Speaker of the House of Representatives, to the Majority Leader of the Senate, to each U.S. Senator and Representative from the State of Rhode Island in the Congress of the United States, and to nearby city and county governments urging that they pass similar resolutions.

APRIL 15, 2024

READ AND PASSED IN COUNCIL



Wendy J. W. Marshall, MMC  
Town Clerk