



CITY OF BELLINGHAM  
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR  
SETH FLEETWOOD

## MAYORAL PROCLAMATION

**WHEREAS**, suicide is a national and statewide public mental health problem which occurs among all age groups and across all socioeconomic, racial and ethnic backgrounds, and is the 10<sup>th</sup> leading cause of death in the United States, and the 2<sup>nd</sup> leading cause of death among individuals between the ages of 10 to 34 (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2021) (US Dept. of Health and Human Services, 2012); and

**WHEREAS**, more than half of Americans know someone who has thought about suicide (Harris Insights & Analytics LLC , 2020); and

**WHEREAS**, on average, there are nationally 130 suicides per day (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention); and

**WHEREAS**, more than 8 million adults report having serious thoughts of suicide, 2.5 million report making a suicide plan, and 1.1 million report a suicide attempt (US Dept. of Health and Human Services, 2012); and

**WHEREAS**, suicide most often occurs when stressors exceed the current coping abilities of someone living with a mental health condition; and

**WHEREAS**, the stigma associated with mental illness and suicidality works against suicide prevention by discouraging persons at risk for suicide from seeking life-saving help and further traumatizes survivors of suicide; and

**WHEREAS**, many people who died by suicide did not receive effective behavioral health services due to the difficulties associated with accessing services by healthcare providers trained in best practices to reduce suicide risk, prejudices and discrimination surrounding the use of behavioral health treatment, and the stigma of losing a loved one to suicide; and

**WHEREAS**, public awareness of the warning signs and the networks available for at-risk individuals are essential to continue lowering the rates of suicide; and

**WHEREAS**, while there is no single cause of suicide and no single suicide prevention program or effort that will be appropriate for all populations or communities, initiatives based on the goals detailed in the National Strategy for Suicide Prevention (US Dept. of Health and Human Services, 2012) and the Washington State Suicide Prevention Plan (Washington State Dept. of Health, 2016) to increase access to quality mental health, substance abuse, and suicide prevention services will help prevent suicide; and



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**WHEREAS**, suicide is preventable, and it is appropriate to bring awareness about suicide.

**NOW, THEREFORE, DO I**, Seth Fleetwood, Mayor of the City of Bellingham, proclaim Saturday, October 16, 2021 to be

## **OUT OF THE DARKNESS SUICIDE PREVENTION DAY**

in the City of Bellingham, Washington, as a way to address the mental health needs in Bellingham of seniors, adults, youth, children, and families is fundamental to having a healthy community.



Signed this 12<sup>th</sup> of October, 2021

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Seth Fleetwood".

Seth Fleetwood, Mayor  
City of Bellingham