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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**STATE SUICIDE PREVENTION PLAN RELEASED**

**Carson City**—The Nevada Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), Office of Suicide Prevention, today released the first Nevada Suicide Prevention Plan during a news conference at the Legislature Building. The plan, a 65-page comprehensive guide and tool that outlines best-practice suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention measures, includes 11 goals and 35 objectives with multiple action steps. The plan is being delivered to Governor Jim Gibbons, members of the Legislature, and various coalition partners. It is also available at <http://dhhs.nv.gov/SuicidePrevention.htm>.

Nevada's suicide rate is almost double the national average. Suicide is the 6<sup>th</sup> leading cause of all deaths in the state; the 3<sup>rd</sup> leading cause of all deaths among people between the ages of 15 to 24. In 2006, more than 400 Nevadans died by suicide.

First Lady Dawn Gibbons, a suicide survivor whose father died by suicide when Dawn was a teenager, attended the news conference and spoke about her personal tragedy of losing her father at a young age. Nevada State Suicide Prevention Training and Networking Facilitator Linda Flatt, a suicide survivor who lost her 25-year-old son to suicide and who has played a major in the development of suicide prevention plans in Nevada, also addressed the pain of living in the aftermath of a loved one's suicide.

Statewide Suicide prevention Coordinator Misty Vaughan Allen said, "I want to express my gratitude to the many partners who have played a key role in the development of the first Nevada Suicide Prevention Plan. The Nevada Coalition for Suicide Prevention, the Commission on Mental Health and Developmental Services, employees from many state agencies, and community members across Nevada, have all been instrumental in publishing this important document."

The Office of Suicide Prevention was created during the 2003 Legislative Session through Nevada Revised Statutes 439.511. The main objective of the office is to develop, implement, and evaluate a state suicide prevention plan.

For more information on suicide prevention, including information on learning the signs of suicidal behavior and a Prevention Resource Directory, go to <http://dhhs.nv.gov/SuicidePrevention.htm>. If you or someone you know is in crisis, call the Nevada Suicide Prevention Hotline at 1-877-885-HOPE (4673), or the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK (8255).

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