



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Contact: Damien Johnson



March 4, 2020
(602) 347-6908

The Arizona Psychiatric Society and the Arizona Medical Association Applaud Lawmakers for Improving Access to Mental Health in Arizona

Phoenix, AZ – The Arizona Psychiatric Society and the Arizona Medical Association applaud Arizona legislators and Governor Doug Ducey for the passage and signing of SB 1523, respectfully named Jake's Law. Sponsored by Senator Kate Brophy-McGee and Representative Jeff Weninger, Jake's Law is a wide-ranging law aimed at reducing Arizona's suicide rate, and promotes transparency and accountability, ensuring that insurance coverage for mental health and substance use disorders is no more restrictive than coverage for any other medical conditions. When mental health coverage is more restrictive than other medical coverage, it can lead to deaths from suicides, overdoses, and other forms of preventable death.

"Jake's Law is hugely important for our state. It not only provides for insurance payment of behavioral health services on par with medical services but represents a truly bipartisan effort led by Governor Ducey and Senator Kate Brophy McGee," stated Don J. Fowls, MD, President of the Arizona Psychiatric Society. "The Arizona Psychiatric Society is proud to have participated with the Coalition led by the JEM Foundation in helping to bring about this historic event." The Coalition for Insurance Parity includes the JEM Foundation, Arizona Psychiatric Society, Arizona Council of Human Service Providers, Mental Health America of Arizona, MIKID, Arizona Chapter of the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, and Neighborhood Council.

Jake's Law helps reduce stigma and support the community through consumer-friendly resources to help patients and families understand their rights. In addition, Jake's Law will increase youth access to mental health care, establish rules for discharge protocols for patients admitted with suicide ideation or suicide attempts, and inform future public policy through new sources of data generated by a Suicide Mortality Review Team.

"This is a great step forward for Arizona as we continue to focus on the importance of whole health and wellness for all," stated Susan Whitely, MD, President of the Arizona Medical Association. "Mental health is a critical component of our overall health. This legislation will improve accessibility to behavioral health professionals for all Arizona residents."

###

About Arizona Psychiatric Society

The Arizona Psychiatric Society (APS) represents approximately 500 Arizona psychiatric physicians and is a district branch of the American Psychiatric Association. The Arizona Psychiatric Society strives to promote the welfare of all those with mental illness and to foster the medically-based principles of psychiatry. For more information, visit www.azpsych.org and follow APS on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [LinkedIn](#).

About Arizona Medical Association

The Arizona Medical Association (ArMA) is the largest organization in the state representing the interests of all physicians. For more than 125 years, ArMA has been advancing patient care and providing its members with leadership, advocacy, education, and networking. For more information, visit www.AZmed.org and follow ArMA on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [LinkedIn](#).