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## **Leaders from Kaiser Permanente, Kennedy Forum, and Saddleback Church Join National Action Alliance for Suicide Prevention's Executive Committee**

*Bertagnolli, Kennedy, and Warren Bring Expertise and Vision to National Suicide Prevention Efforts*

Washington, DC – The National Action Alliance for Suicide Prevention (Action Alliance), today, announced three new Executive Committee members have joined the Action Alliance to help save lives. The leaders are selected by Action Alliance Co-Chairs, Robert W. Turner of Union Pacific Corporation and Jessica L. Garfola Wright of the United States Department of Defense. The new members – Andrew Bertagnolli, PhD, of Kaiser Permanente's Care Management Institute, Patrick J. Kennedy of the Kennedy Forum, and Kay Warren of Saddleback Church – each bring expertise and a passion to strengthen the Action Alliance's impact and support its vision of a nation free from the tragic experience of suicide.

"All three leaders are integral assets to the Action Alliance Executive Committee and their influence will be key to advancing suicide prevention and awareness on a national level," said Action Alliance Co-Chair, Robert W. Turner of Union Pacific Corporation. "They will aid in the promotion and implementation of transforming health systems for safer suicide care, advancement of mental health policies, and work with faith communities to promote protective barriers against suicide in the United States."

"I am happy to join in this suicide prevention effort and help the Action Alliance advance its important work," said Kay Warren, faith leader from Lake Forest, California, who lost her son to suicide.

Patrick Kennedy, a 16-year veteran of the United States House of Representatives, who is known as author and lead sponsor of the Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act of 2008, looks to bring suicide to the forefront in the healthcare system.

"As a country, we must do more for individuals in suicidal crisis. We must improve our healthcare systems and our mental health policies. We must come together to talk about suicide as treatable and preventable," said Kennedy, Co-Founder of One Mind, and Founder of the Kennedy Forum. "Suicide is the last poor outcome of our mental health system. As a member of the Action Alliance's Executive Committee, when I travel and connect with so many around the United States, I am committed to promoting suicide prevention by improving our mental health systems."

## **Introducing the new Action Alliance Executive Committee Members:**

**Andrew Bertagnolli, PhD, Senior Manager for Behavioral Health at Kaiser Permanente’s Care Management Institute** – Dr. Bertagnolli has worked at Kaiser Permanente since 1996 and in his current role since 2006. With more than 20 years of health care experience, Dr. Bertagnolli brings together his passion for integrating behavioral health into primary care delivery systems through rapid cycle process improvement methods. Dr. Bertagnolli is also the staff psychologist at Spinecare Medical Group in Daly City, California and an Adjunct Professor at Alliant International University and California Institute of Integral Studies. He has previously been on the faculty of the Wright Institute, San Francisco State University, University of California-Berkeley Extension and University of California-San Francisco and serves as an expert reviewer for the California Board of Psychology.

**The Honorable Patrick J. Kennedy, Former United States Representative, Rhode Island; Co-Founder, One Mind, and Founder, Kennedy Forum** – Patrick Kennedy launched the Kennedy Center for Mental Health Policy and Research as a medical school-based organization to expand and promote best practices in mental health and addiction treatment in the United States with The Morehouse School of Medicine and The Kennedy Forum mental health advocacy group. Kennedy founded the Kennedy Forum on Community Mental Health, which serves as a vehicle to celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of President Kennedy’s signing of the Community Mental Health Act, the landmark bill that laid the foundation of contemporary mental health policy. He is also the co-founder of One Mind, a national coalition seeking new treatments and cures for neurologic and psychiatric diseases of the brain and uniting efforts of scientists, research universities, government agencies, and industry and advocacy organizations. Kennedy is also a winner of the multiple public service awards and has been recognized by many organizations for his mental health advocacy.

**Kay Warren, Co-Founder, Saddleback Church** – Kay Warren, along with her husband Rick, founded the Saddleback Church in Lake Forest, California. She is a passionate Bible teacher and respected advocate for those living with HIV& AIDS, orphaned and vulnerable children, as well as for those affected by a mental illness. As an advocate, she has traveled to 19 countries, calling the faith community as well as the public and private sectors to respond with prevention, care, treatment, and support of people living with the virus. She founded Saddleback's HIV & AIDS Initiative and is the author of *Choose Joy: Because Happiness Isn't Enough, Say Yes to God* and co-author of *Foundations*, a systematic theology course used by churches worldwide. She has written powerfully about losing a child to suicide featured in *Christianity Today*, called “A Year of Grieving Dangerously.”

More information on each leader can be found at [actionallianceforsuicideprevention.org/leadership](http://actionallianceforsuicideprevention.org/leadership).

### **The National Action Alliance for Suicide Prevention**

([www.ActionAllianceforSuicidePrevention.org](http://www.ActionAllianceforSuicidePrevention.org)) is the public-private partnership working to advance the *National Strategy for Suicide Prevention* and make suicide prevention a national priority. Education Development Center, Inc. (EDC) operates the Secretariat for the Action Alliance, which was launched in 2010 by former U.S. Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius and former U.S. Defense Secretary Robert Gates with the goal of saving 20,000 lives in five years. Contact: Eileen Sexton, Director of Communications, 202-572-5383, [esexton@edc.org](mailto:esexton@edc.org).