

(Your Name)

(Address)

(City/State/Zip Code)

Tel: (xxx)xxx-xxxx Email: xxxxx@xxx.com

(DATE)

(Name of Person/Place)

(Address)

(City/State/Zip Code)

RE: Project: 'Save A Life – (Name of Bridge)'

Dear Ms. XXXX:

My name is (YOUR NAME) and I have been a resident of (CITY WHERE YOU LIVE). (MENTION ANY CREDENTIALS YOU HAVE/VOLUNTEERING/ETC).

This letter is about a proposal I have for a project that could enhance the utility and purpose of the Call Boxes the Crisis Center has made available for emergency use by those who are attempting to use the Sunshine Skyway Bridge to commit suicide. (IF THE BRIDGE IN YOUR AREA DOES NOT HAVE CALL BOXES, CONTACT YOUR LOCAL CRISIS CENTER AND INQUIRE ABOUT HAVING THEM INSTALLED).

The proposal I have is to place encouraging worded signs/placards along the top of the Jersey Barriers on the bridge with the objective of catching the attention of the person attempting suicide and give them pause to reconsider their intended action and/or to perhaps use the phone and seek help. The signs would not be a distraction for passing traffic as they would be placed atop the Jersey Barriers visible only to someone on foot. Passing drivers would not be distracted by these signs.

I have included several suggestions and samples of signs in the following pages of this letter.

A similar project was done in England on a bridge used by people wishing to commit suicide. There was success as five people were saved that stated they would have jumped had they not seen those messages. The messages were created by a young woman who had them laminated and tied to a fence on a bridge where people jump. Unfortunately, the signs were

removed by the City because of driver distraction. That is why I suggest the signs lay flat on the Jersey Barriers.

There is also a woman in Arizona who is trying to get City approval for signs to be posted at a suicide bridge. So far, she has encountered the same issue—concern by local authorities about the signs creating a driver distraction. Again, if the signs lay flat there is no driver distraction. Only one more affordable life-saving measure in place where suicide attempts are made.

Suicide is a painful and unpleasant topic – both to the person in crisis and their family and friends. The **(NAME OF BRIDGE)** is known in the area for being a site people use to commit suicide. **(NAME OF THE CRISIS CENTER IF THERE IS ONE WHO HAS INSTALLED CALL BOXES)** is to be commended for placing call boxes on the bridge. Now is the time to expand on the scope of preventing suicides by adding positive message signs/placards to compliment the phones.

A person who is feeling desperate enough to jump needs a reason to take pause. A reason to reach out for help. They are on the bridge alone, scared, hurt and confused with no one physically there to take them by the hand in that moment and offer life encouragement by saying something positive like, *“It will get better”* or *“I care.”*. A placard with a positive message may just catch their eye and in stopping to read it, that person intending to commit suicide may gain that moment to reconsider proceeding further.

Alternative enhanced anti-suicide measures such as full-time guards are impractical from a cost and being in the right place at the right time reason. Placards are a much more cost - effective method and can be placed at those areas known to attract those wanting to commit suicide. Placards with positive words, words that could give a potential jumper a reason to pause and make that call to **(NAME OF THE CRISIS CENTER)** and get help either through the call box or their own cell phone. Or, to wait on the bridge long enough for help to arrive.

There is no guarantee that the placards will stop every person from jumping, but I am certain it will help decrease the number of ‘recoveries’ required to be made by Fire/Police/Coastguard personnel.

I say in my book, *“Words can lift you up.”* It is amazing how much power words have. It is amazing the difference a kind or supportive word can make to someone in a crisis.

Enclosed please find an outline for the project I have entitled *‘Save A Life – (NAME OF BRIDGE)’* and a mock-up of suggested aluminum metal signs **which would be bolted at all four corners and lay flat on top** of the Jersey Barriers on the **(NAME OF BRIDGE)** - particularly in the center span area of the bridge where people tend to jump. The sample is

to show how a sign would look in terms of word placement – not the exact dimensions.

I sincerely hope you give the following project idea entitled, '*Save A Life – (NAME OF BRIDGE)*' your strongest consideration. The holidays are right around the corner and that usually coincides with an increase in suicides.

The goal of this project is to help hurting people and decrease the number of fatalities on the Sunshine Skyway Bridge.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

(YOUR NAME)

CC: (SEND COPIES OF THE LETTER/PROJECT)

Governor
Department of Transportation
Local Media (TV and Newspaper)
State Highway Patrol
Attorney General of (Your State)