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Florida Attorney General's Office News Release

BTB Presented to Sgt. for Saving Teen from Suicide



TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—Attorney General Ashley Moody presented a Back the Blue Award to Orange County Sheriff's Office Sergeant Kathleen Ela for her efforts in saving a teen from taking his own life. Sgt. Ela responded to a call of a distressed teen sitting on the edge of a Florida overpass, stating he was tired of life and wanting to jump off the bridge. Sgt. Ela asked for permission to join the teen on the bridge. Once the teen agreed, Sgt. Ela sat next to him for nearly half an hour. Sgt. Ela gained the teen's trust and offered a pinky swear that he would not be arrested. Sgt. Ela assisted the teen off the ledge and OCSO deputies facilitated getting the teen help.

Attorney General Ashley Moody said, "I am incredibly proud of the compassionate and thoughtful work carried out by Sgt. Kathleen Ela. A law enforcement officer's job is not always limited to issuing traffic tickets or responding to criminal activity. They stand ready to protect citizens in our communities regardless of the situation and, for that, we owe them a debt of gratitude. I'm grateful Sgt. Ela was there that day—a life depended on it."

Earlier this year, Attorney General Moody became an ambassador to the Jason Foundation—an organization dedicated to the prevention of youth suicide. The Jason Foundation works to combat the silent epidemic through educational and awareness programs that equip educators, parents, young people and youth workers with tools and resources to help identify and assist at-risk youth.

September is Suicide Prevention Month. The month is dedicated to raising awareness about taking action to prevent suicide by changing the conversation surrounding suicide through healing, help and hope. Having a conversation, providing support and helping those in need can prevent suicide and save lives.

If you or someone you know is struggling with thoughts of suicide, know there is help available. The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline is accessible 24 hours a day at 1(800) 273-TALK.

To nominate a law enforcement officer, citizen or organization for a Back the Blue Award, or for more information about Attorney General Moody's Back the Blue campaign, click here.

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Attorney General Ashley Moody's Back the Blue campaign highlights law enforcement officers, citizens and organizations taking extraordinary steps to forge positive relationships between law enforcement and the communities they serve. Supporting law enforcement is a top priority for Attorney General Moody and the mission of Back the Blue is to commend Florida's brave law enforcement officers and Floridians who back them.