

Quad City Labor Unites with The Gray Matters Collective to Demand Suicide Prevention Measures at I-74 Bridge

MOLINE, IL, UNITED STATES, July 1, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- For too many families in our region, the I-74 Bridge has become a site of heartbreak. The Quad Cities faces a suicide rate higher than the national average, and this bridge—connecting Iowa and Illinois—stands as a stark reminder of the urgent need for action. It's not the structure itself that causes tragedy, but the absence of safeguards that leaves a gap in our community's defenses.



Today, a powerful coalition of labor unions from Iowa and Illinois joins The Gray Matters Collective to demand real, evidence-based suicide prevention on the I-74 Bridge. Together, we are calling for physical barriers, prominent crisis hotline signage, and emergency phones that connect directly to the 988 Lifeline or local crisis lines—proven measures that can create a moment of pause and a pathway to help.

Statements from Labor & Advocacy Leaders

Tim Drea, President, Illinois AFL-CIO: "The Illinois AFL-CIO stands in solidarity with all partners working to address the mental health crisis in our region. We add our voice to the call for evidence-based prevention measures on the I-74 Bridge, and we urge swift action to protect the well-being of everyone who calls this community home."

Charlie Wishman, President, Iowa AFL-CIO: "The safety and well-being of our community is a responsibility we all share. We know that proven solutions exist, and it's time to put them into action on the I-74 Bridge. Lives depend on it, and we won't rest until every person has the support they need."

Dan Gosa, President, Quad City Federation of Labor: "Our members live and work here. We see the impact of these tragedies firsthand. It's time to step up—not just with words, but with real solutions to make the I-74 Bridge a place of hope, not loss. The Quad Cities has always come together to address challenges across state lines, and this issue deserves the same unity and commitment. The partnership between Iowa and Illinois labor organizations and The Gray Matters Collective demonstrates a shared belief that protecting human life is a community responsibility. We cannot prevent every tragedy, but we can strengthen the safety net that protects our neighbors. Implementing these measures on the I-74 Bridge is a meaningful investment in public safety, mental health, and hope."

Jason Anderson, AFGE District 7: "A bridge should always be a symbol of connection, not loss. By taking proven steps to prevent suicide, we can ensure the I-74 Bridge stands as a symbol of hope, compassion, and our unwavering commitment to protecting human life."

Haley DeGreve, The Gray Matters Collective: "Every life lost to suicide sends shockwaves through our community. I am incredibly grateful to see leaders from AFGE District 7, the Illinois AFL-CIO, the Iowa AFL-CIO, the Quad City Federation of Labor, and so many others come together in support of a cause that touches every one of us. When labor stands alongside mental health advocates, it sends a powerful message that every life matters and that hope is always possible. This kind of unity is how real change happens. Communities across the country have shown that barriers, crisis signage, and direct emergency phone lines save lives. There is every reason to believe they can save lives here too. Together, we have the opportunity to transform the I-74 Bridge from a place known for tragedy into a symbol of hope, healing, and the belief that every person is worth fighting for."

Jon Zumkehr, President of AFGE Local 4070: "As union leaders, our duty goes beyond the workplace—this is our community. The Gray Matters Collective proves that when we face tough problems together, we save lives. Suicide prevention is everyone's job, and we're proud to make sure anyone crossing the I-74 Bridge knows they matter and help is always here."

Call to Action We urge local, state, and federal authorities to unite with this coalition and the broader community to implement these evidence-based suicide prevention interventions without delay. Every day of inaction risks another life.

About the Coalition This statement is issued jointly by The Gray Matters Collective, Quad City Federation of Labor, Illinois AFL-CIO, Iowa AFL-CIO, and AFGE District 7, representing thousands of workers and families across the Quad Cities.

Together, we believe the I-74 Bridge must stand for safety, hope, and the unwavering belief that every life is worth saving.

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