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## **SAVE's STATEMENT REGARDING DEATH OF LEGENDARY COUNTRY MUSIC STAR NAOMI JUDD**

**Minneapolis, MN** - (April 30, 2022) --- SAVE (Suicide Awareness Voices of Education) was sad to learn the news today that legendary country music star Naomi Judd passed away today "to the disease of mental illness" according to a statement released by her family.

Following years of struggles with depression and talking openly about having battled thoughts of suicide, her loss reminds us how challenging mental illnesses can be for anyone. Mental illnesses are common, meaning they occur frequently among all ages, races, gender and sexual orientation, religions, among those in the cities, in rural communities and of all economic levels. The earlier they can be identified, treated and monitored, the more likely an individual can return to and lead a healthy life. For some, however, the illnesses and external forces become overwhelming and can lead to thoughts of suicide or suicidal behaviors. Suicide is not common, but because it is a leading cause of death across the lifespan, it is important to remind the public that by far the majority of those living with a mental illness will not go onto die by suicide. At the same time, suicide is definitely something we need to be more aware of, we need to avoid normalizing and we all need to be more engaged in preventing.

"We have made progress in understanding mental illness and suicide, but we are not able to prevent all of the tragedies we experience every day in the country and world relative to suicide," said Dr. Dan Reidenberg, an international expert in suicide prevention and the Executive Director of SAVE. "There is a long overdue and clear need for massive federal, private foundation and public investment in suicide prevention if we want to begin to see a change in the direction of suicide in the US." Raising awareness about suicide and mental illness, conducting education and training programs, developing a better understanding the brain and the external factors that create an increased risk for some, new and better treatments are just some of the immediate needs we have to help prevent future suicides.

The singer's passing also reminds us that no one is immune from a death by suicide. As noted in the Official US Data Sheets released by SAVE (<https://save.org/about-suicide/suicide-statistics>), there were 45,979 suicide deaths in the US in 2020 or 125 per day. This means that as well as Ms. Judd's family, 124 other families will suffer the loss of a loved one to suicide today as they did yesterday and they will tomorrow and the next day. Every life lost to suicide creates immense pain and often catastrophic effects for those left behind. If you or someone is struggling, please reach out to the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 800-273-8255 or text SAVE to 741 741 and talk with a trained counselor 24/7 for free, confidential help. For more information on suicide and grief visit [www.SAVE.org](http://www.SAVE.org).

SAVE ([www.save.org](http://www.save.org)) is a leading national nonprofit suicide prevention organization that has been at the forefront of suicide prevention and suicide grief support for 30 years. SAVE has charters in 17 states, created evidence-based and best practice programs, safe messaging certification, peer support and suicide loss survivor programs, conducts training and education programs around the world and provides technical assistance to federal, state, local governments and companies.

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