

House Memorial

A memorial to the Congress of the United States,
 urging Congress to recognize the epidemic of suicide
 among veterans and to fully fund suicide prevention
 efforts by the United States Department of Veterans
 Affairs.

WHEREAS, according to the 2020 National Veteran Suicide
 Prevention Annual Report by the United States Department of
 Veterans Affairs, there were an average of 17.6 veteran suicide
 deaths per day in 2018, totaling an average of 6,435 veteran
 suicide deaths that year, and

WHEREAS, the department has found that veterans who die by
 suicide are more likely than the civilian population to have
 sleep disorders, traumatic brain injuries, or chronic pain
 diagnoses in addition to mental health conditions such as
 posttraumatic stress disorder, bipolar disorder, personality
 disorder, substance use disorder, schizophrenia, depression, and
 anxiety, and

WHEREAS, some veterans have reported difficulty in
 transitioning to civilian employment, as their highly developed
 skills obtained in military service may not translate to higher-
 level civilian jobs, and the resulting economic disparities,
 unemployment, poverty, and homelessness among veterans are shown
 to be risk factors for veteran suicide, and

26 WHEREAS, the United States Department of Veterans Affairs'
 27 Veteran Crisis Line is the world's largest provider of crisis
 28 call, text, and chat services for veterans, receiving
 29 approximately 650,000 calls per year, and

30 WHEREAS, the department has made significant progress in
 31 the area of suicide prevention through clinical research, the
 32 development and testing of evidence-based psychotherapy methods
 33 and medications, and behavioral, complementary, and alternative
 34 approaches to treating veterans with posttraumatic stress
 35 disorder and other mental health conditions, and

36 WHEREAS, the department is partnered with hundreds of
 37 national and local organizations and corporations, including
 38 veterans service organizations, professional sports teams, and
 39 major employers, in order to raise awareness of its suicide
 40 prevention resources and to educate the public about supporting
 41 veterans and servicemembers in their communities, and

42 WHEREAS, although RAND Corporation studies have found that
 43 the United States Department of Veterans Affairs outperforms
 44 other systems in the area of mental health care, the rising
 45 trend in veteran suicides continues to plague the men and women
 46 who selflessly served in the United States Armed Forces and to
 47 devastate their families, friends, and loved ones, NOW,

48 THEREFORE,

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 50 Be It Resolved by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

HM 63

2022

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52 That the Congress of the United States is urged to
53 recognize the current crisis of veteran suicide and to fully
54 fund suicide prevention efforts undertaken by the United States
55 Department of Veterans Affairs.

56 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
57 dispatched to the President of the United States, to the
58 President of the United States Senate, to the Speaker of the
59 United States House of Representatives, and to each member of
60 the Florida delegation to the United States Congress.