
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

SENATE RESOLUTION

No. 186 Session of
2017

INTRODUCED BY AUMENT, LEACH, EICHELBERGER, GREENLEAF, MARTIN,
BARTOLOTTA, BROOKS, DINNIMAN, ARGALL, BROWNE, YUDICHAK,
FARNESE, RESCHENTHALER, BREWSTER, SCAVELLO, MENSCH,
LANGERHOLC, SABATINA, RAFFERTY, COSTA, FOLMER AND HUGHES,
SEPTEMBER 19, 2017

INTRODUCED AND ADOPTED, SEPTEMBER 19, 2017

A RESOLUTION

1 Designating the month of September 2017 as "Veteran Suicide
2 Prevention and Awareness Month" in Pennsylvania.

3 WHEREAS, Current studies confirm a high suicide rate among
4 veterans; and

5 WHEREAS, Though veterans make up less than 9% of the United
6 States population, more than 7,400 veterans took their own lives
7 in 2014, accounting for 18% of all suicides in America; and

8 WHEREAS, In 2014, an average of 20 veterans died from suicide
9 each day; and

10 WHEREAS, Roughly 65% of all veteran suicides in 2014 were
11 individuals 50 years of age or older; and

12 WHEREAS, Among male veterans, the largest number of lives
13 lost to suicide occurs in middle-aged males 50 to 69 years of
14 age, while the highest rates of suicide are among the youngest
15 males 18 to 29 years of age; and

16 WHEREAS, In 2014, the rate of suicide among veteran males was

1 37 per 100,000, and since 2001, the age-adjusted rate of suicide
2 among veteran males has increased by 30.5%; and

3 WHEREAS, Among veteran females, the largest number of lives
4 lost to suicide occurs in middle-aged females 40 to 59 years of
5 age, but the highest rate occurs among the youngest female
6 veterans 18 to 29 years of age; and

7 WHEREAS, In 2014, the rate of suicide among veteran females
8 was 18.9 per 100,000, and since 2001, the age-adjusted rate of
9 suicide among veteran females has dramatically increased by
10 85.2%; and

11 WHEREAS, After adjusting for differences in age and gender,
12 risk for suicide was 21% higher among veterans when compared
13 with civilian adults; and

14 WHEREAS, Officials at the Department of Veterans Affairs have
15 responded to the veteran suicide crisis by boosting the
16 department's mental health personnel and suicide hotline staff
17 in recent years; and

18 WHEREAS, Each Veterans' Administration facility has been
19 asked to commit to "Be There" for veterans through a number of
20 enhanced methods, including a "no wrong door" philosophy for
21 suicide prevention to ensure that every Veterans' Administration
22 employee assists veterans in need and establishes buddy systems
23 so veterans have someone to reach out to when needed; and

24 WHEREAS, Communities, peers, close associates and the media
25 are critical in preventing death by suicide; therefore be it

26 RESOLVED, That the Senate designate the month of September
27 2017 as "Veteran Suicide Prevention and Awareness Month" in
28 Pennsylvania; and be it further

29 RESOLVED, That the Senate urge civilians to help prevent
30 veteran suicide by learning about the warning signs of

1 depression and crisis; and be it further

2 RESOLVED, That the Senate urge the residents of this
3 Commonwealth to "Be There" for our veterans and learn about ways
4 to support veterans in need; and be it further

5 RESOLVED, That the Senate fully support the bipartisan
6 actions of the Congress of the United States and the Department
7 of Veterans Affairs as they continue to work together to improve
8 the needed support for our veterans; and be it further

9 RESOLVED, That a copy of this resolution be transmitted to
10 the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs in support of
11 the department's continued efforts to prevent military suicides.