
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 988 Session of
2015

INTRODUCED BY SCHWEYER, REGAN, SCHLOSSBERG, HENNESSEY, QUIGLEY, KIRKLAND, DEAN, READSHAW, EMRICK, FREEMAN, BIZZARRO, COHEN, ENGLISH, YOUNGBLOOD, KINSEY, TOOIL, LONGIETTI, BURNS, MURT, COOK-ARTIS, DRISCOLL, DAY, O'BRIEN, DIGIROLAMO, MILLARD, CONKLIN, CALTAGIRONE, LEWIS, GIBBONS, ROSS, WARD, WHEELAND, SCHLEGEL CULVER, SAYLOR, KAVULICH, MARSHALL, MARSICO, EVERETT, DAVIS, PHILLIPS-HILL, A. HARRIS, GOODMAN, GROVE, KAUFFMAN, HARHAI, DeLUCA, MAHONEY, SONNEY, PAYNE, GINGRICH, MAJOR, FARRY, DUSH, GILLEN, DONATUCCI AND SANKEY, SEPTEMBER 7, 2016

INTRODUCED AS NONCONTROVERSIAL RESOLUTION UNDER RULE 35, SEPTEMBER 7, 2016

A RESOLUTION

1 Designating the month of September 2016 as "Military Suicide
2 Prevention and Awareness Month" in Pennsylvania.

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

5 WHEREAS, It is estimated that nationwide 22 veterans take
6 their own lives each day; and

7 WHEREAS, Recent veterans who have served on active duty in
8 the military since the start of the Global War on Terror and
9 operations in Afghanistan and Iraq have committed suicide at a
10 much higher rate than those who never served in the military;
11 and

12 WHEREAS, A new analysis published in the February 2015 issue
13 of the *Annals of Epidemiology* tracked all 1,282,074 veterans who

served in active-duty units between 2001 and 2007 and left the military during that same military period; and

WHEREAS, The analysis matched military records with the National Death Index, which collects data on every death, and tracked the veterans after service until the end of 2009, finding an alarming total of 1,868 suicides from that group; and

WHEREAS, The reason for the elevated suicide rate among recent veterans remains unclear but can most likely be attributed to factors such as the long wars in Afghanistan and Iraq and added tours of duty; and

WHEREAS, These wars have attracted more volunteers prone to risk-taking who face a difficult transition to civilian life due to a prolonged, weakened economy and the unavailability of employment upon returning home; and

WHEREAS, On January 12, 2015, the Congress of the United States passed the Clay Hunt Suicide Prevention for American Veterans Act, named after Marine Corps veteran Corporal Clay Hunt; and

WHEREAS, Corporal Hunt served honorably in both Afghanistan and Iraq and was wounded in battle; and

WHEREAS, Upon his return home, Corporal Hunt grappled with post-traumatic stress disorder, and sadly, in March 2011 at 28 years of age, Corporal Hunt took his own life; and

WHEREAS, Officials at the Department of Veterans Affairs have responded to the veteran suicide crisis by boosting their mental health personnel and suicide hotline staff in recent years, yet there is still more to do; therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives designate the month of September 2016 as "Military Suicide Prevention and Awareness Month" in Pennsylvania; and be it further

1 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives fully support the
2 bipartisan actions of the 114th Congress of the United States
3 and the United States Department of Veterans Affairs as they
4 continue to work together to improve the needed support for our
5 veterans.