
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION
No. **349** **Session of**
2017

INTRODUCED BY HEFFLEY, BIZZARRO, DUSH, SONNEY, SCHLOSSBERG,
McGINNIS, R. BROWN, DRISCOLL, PASHINSKI, COX, O'NEILL,
LONGIETTI, SCHWEYER, V. BROWN, READSHAW, WHEATLEY, MULLERY,
CALTAGIRONE, MILLARD, EMRICK, JAMES, SAINATO, MARSHALL,
ROTHMAN, WHEELAND, WARD, IRVIN, A. HARRIS, D. COSTA, NEILSON,
HILL-EVANS AND HAHN, MAY 23, 2017

INTRODUCED AS NONCONTROVERSIAL RESOLUTION UNDER RULE 35,
MAY 23, 2017

A RESOLUTION

1 Recognizing the Mission 22 campaign and raising awareness for
2 the ongoing epidemic of veteran suicide.

3 WHEREAS, An average of 22 veterans commit suicide every day
4 in the United States; and

5 WHEREAS, The 22-per-day death average, released by the United
6 States Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) in 2013, is the
7 center of a campaign named Mission 22; and

8 WHEREAS, Mission 22 is a national nonprofit organization
9 which has the charter of stemming the tide of suicides among our
10 military personnel and veterans; and

11 WHEREAS, Mission 22 derives its name from the startling
12 statistic that 22 United States veterans take their own lives
13 each day and is designed to enlist support in the fight against
14 veteran suicide; and

15 WHEREAS, From 2001 to 2014, The VA found suicides among

1 United States adult civilians increased 23% while veteran
2 suicides increased 32%, making the risk of suicide 11% greater
3 for veterans than civilians; and

4 WHEREAS, The reason for the elevated suicide rate among
5 recent veterans remains unclear but is most likely attributed to
6 factors such as the lengthy wars in Afghanistan and Iraq and
7 added tours of duty; and

8 WHEREAS, Mission 22 was founded by Special Forces operators
9 Magnus Johnson, Mike Kissel and Infantryman Brad Hubbard; and

10 WHEREAS, Because of their personal battles with posttraumatic
11 stress disorder (PTSD) and traumatic brain injury (TBI), the
12 founders' mission is to end veteran suicide in America; and

13 WHEREAS, Mission 22 launched on October 22, 2014, with a call
14 to action for the public to "claim a 22" on social media; and

15 WHEREAS, These public messages offer an easy way to send a
16 loud message of compassion to the men and women who put their
17 lives on the line to protect and serve the United States; and

18 WHEREAS, The campaign also directs attention to the Mission
19 22 website, which provides a list of resources for veterans who
20 are in need of help and intends to end the stigma surrounding
21 PTSD and TBI; and

22 WHEREAS, Mission 22 also creates large-scale public memorials
23 to honor veterans featuring the "War at Home Memorial," a mobile
24 monument with a steel plate created in the likeness of a real
25 American veteran who lost the battle with PTSD or TBI; and

26 WHEREAS, The "War at Home Memorial" details the life and
27 service of a veteran in an inscription located at the base of
28 the plate and also honors all those who lost the battle at home;
29 and

30 WHEREAS, These memorials travel the country before they

1 eventually reach a permanent site in Washington, DC; and
2 WHEREAS, The Borough of Lehighton, Pennsylvania, will be
3 receiving a memorial cutout during the last week in April in
4 honor of Michael C. Wargo, a 1994 graduate of Lehighton Area
5 High School; and

6 WHEREAS, Specialist Wargo joined the United States Army after
7 9/11 and spent 10 months in Afghanistan as a chemical weapons
8 specialist before suffering with PTSD for eight years and taking
9 his life on May 20, 2013; and

10 WHEREAS, Two other Pennsylvania veterans were chosen for the
11 "War at Home Memorial" distinction; and

12 WHEREAS, On May 22, 2017, Mission 22 will display one of the
13 steel silhouettes from the "War at Home Memorial" at Soldiers'
14 Grove on the Capitol Complex, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania; and

15 WHEREAS, The residents of Pennsylvania have a responsibility
16 to help our brothers-in-arms and sisters-in-arms who suffer from
17 the deepest, invisible wounds of war before these veterans
18 believe their only choice is taking their own lives; and

19 WHEREAS, The health and well-being of the courageous men and
20 women who served in uniform are of the highest priority for the
21 House of Representatives; therefore be it

22

23 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives recognize and
24 fully support the Mission 22 campaign as it continues to raise
25 awareness about veteran suicide and works to ensure that our
26 veterans and the families of all service members receive the
27 care, support and service in their greatest hour of need; and be
28 it further

29 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives recommit to
30 providing timely access to high-quality, recovery-oriented

1 mental health care to veterans, especially when they are in
2 crisis; and be it further

3 RESOLVED, That a copy of this resolution be transmitted to
4 Mission 22, P.O. Box 1511, Nashville, IN, 47448.