
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 489 Session of
2017

INTRODUCED BY SCHWEYER, HENNESSEY, BIZZARRO, DONATUCCI, ROZZI,
THOMAS, RYAN, DRISCOLL, DIGIROLAMO, MURT, YOUNGBLOOD,
SCHLOSSBERG, SONNEY, DUSH, FREEMAN, WARREN, CALTAGIRONE,
McNEILL, SOLOMON, MILLARD, WARD, PASHINSKI, KINSEY,
LONGIETTI, BURNS, MACKENZIE, DEASY, SAINATO, ROTHMAN,
READSHAW, NEILSON, SANKEY, GOODMAN, D. COSTA, J. HARRIS,
MARSICO, GILLEN, MASSER, CONKLIN, RAPP, FARRY AND WATSON,
SEPTEMBER 12, 2017

INTRODUCED AS NONCONTROVERSIAL RESOLUTION UNDER RULE 35,
SEPTEMBER 12, 2017

A RESOLUTION

1 Designating the month of September 2017 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, Veterans who have served on active duty in the
8 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 have never served in the
11 military; 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
14 served in active-duty units between 2001 and 2007 and left the

1 military during that same period; and

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

29 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives fully support the
30 bipartisan actions of the 115th Congress and the United States

- 1 Department of Veterans Affairs as they continue to work together
- 2 to improve the needed support for our veterans.