
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 463 Session of
2015

INTRODUCED BY SCHWEYER, READSHAW, THOMAS, SNYDER, QUIGLEY,
HENNESSEY, DiGIROLAMO, MACKENZIE, HARHART, MURT, DAVIDSON,
BIZZARRO, BARRAR, COHEN, BURNS, FLYNN, SACCONI, ACOSTA,
SONNEY, DUSH, MILLARD, C. PARKER, FARINA, A. HARRIS, DAVIS,
VEREB, LONGIETTI, P. DALEY, FREEMAN, SCHREIBER, GIBBONS,
R. BROWN, O'NEILL, YOUNGBLOOD, HAHN, PAYNE, ROZZI,
SCHLOSSBERG, MAHONEY, KINSEY, MAJOR, MARSICO, PETRI, McNEILL,
GOODMAN, GILLEN, SAINATO, PHILLIPS-HILL, O'BRIEN, DRISCOLL,
WHEELAND, D. COSTA, GINGRICH, FARRY, DEAN, KLUNK, SAYLOR AND
FEE, SEPTEMBER 4, 2015

INTRODUCED AS NONCONTROVERSIAL RESOLUTION UNDER RULE 35,
SEPTEMBER 4, 2015

A RESOLUTION

1 Designating the month September 2015 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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

27 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives designate the
28 month of September 2015 as "Military Suicide Prevention and
29 Awareness Month" in Pennsylvania; and be it further

30 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives fully support the

1 bi-partisan actions of the 114th Congress and the United States
2 Department of Veterans Affairs as they continue to work together
3 to improve the needed support for our veterans.