



March 3, 2026

The Honorable Jerry Moran  
Chairman, Committee on Veterans Affairs,  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mike Bost  
Chairman, Committee on Veterans Affairs,  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Richard Blumenthal  
Ranking Member, Committee on Veterans  
Affairs, United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mark Takano  
Ranking Member, Committee on Veterans  
Affairs, U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairmen Moran and Bost and Ranking Members Blumenthal and Takano,

On behalf of the VALOR Coalition, thank you for the opportunity to submit this statement for the record of today's joint hearing of the Senate and House Committees on Veterans' Affairs regarding legislative priorities impacting America's servicemen and women and their families.

The VALOR Coalition (Veteran Alliance for Leadership, Outreach, and Recovery) is a veteran-led, nonpartisan coalition uniting leading veteran service organizations to advance safe, evidence-based psychedelic-assisted therapy (PAT) access for veterans with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), traumatic brain injury (TBI), treatment resistant depression (TRD), and related conditions. Our mission is to confront the veteran suicide crisis by advocating for research-backed psychedelic-assisted therapies; supporting policy solutions grounded in safety and science; and expanding access to effective, supervised care for veterans. VALOR was founded by Veterans Exploring Treatment Solutions (VETS), the Navy SEAL Foundation, the Green Beret Foundation, and the Wounded Warrior Project (WWP), and its members include Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America (IAVA), the Light Up to Live Foundation, and Home Base.

Veterans are one of the most vulnerable populations when it comes to mental health. Since 2001, over 125,000 veterans have died by suicide, and 29% of Global War on Terrorism veterans are known to suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). The disproportionate incidence of PTSD among veterans is also a driver of the disproportionate incidence of suicide among them. We lose no less than 17 and by some

estimates as many as 44 U.S. veterans to suicide every day, at nearly double the rate of non-veteran Americans lost to suicide each year.<sup>12</sup>

VALOR formed because the veteran suicide crisis remains persistent, structural, and unacceptable; and because innovation in veteran mental health has lagged behind both the science and the urgency of the crisis. VALOR formed to ensure that innovation is not slowed by stigma, politics, or inertia.

Despite billions in prevention efforts, thousands of veterans continue to die every year. Current mental health treatment options available to our veterans through VA healthcare facilities have been far from universally effective. While existing treatments such as Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT), traditional talk therapy, and commonly prescribed antidepressants including selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs) provide meaningful relief for some veterans, far too many continue to experience persistent and debilitating symptoms despite diligent participation in these conventional interventions.

Recent research demonstrates the remarkable potential of psychedelic-assisted therapies (PAT) to address the complex mental health challenges faced by our veterans. A study by the Stanford Brain Stimulation Lab enrolled 30 U.S. Special Operations Forces veterans and found a notable decline in PTSD, anxiety, depression, and an improvement in cognitive function post-PAT treatment.<sup>3</sup> A study at Ohio State's Center for Psychedelic Drug Research and Education (CPDRE) observed hundreds of veterans receiving psychedelic therapies using cognitive and behavioral questionnaires. The results indicated significant reductions in suicidal ideation, cognitive impairment, and symptoms of PTSD.<sup>4</sup> The Johns Hopkins Psychedelic Research Center published a study finding that two doses of psilocybin eased symptoms of major depressive disorder in adults for up to 12 months.<sup>5</sup> Even the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) acknowledges that randomized controlled trials (RCTs) of MDMA-assisted therapy have shown promising results in improving PTSD symptoms.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> "Operation Deep Dive." *America's Warrior Partnership*, 15 January 2025, <https://www.americaswarriorpartnership.org/opdd-archives>

<sup>2</sup> "VA.org | Veteran Suicide Data and Reporting." *VA.gov*, 5 February 2026, [www.mentalhealth.va.gov/suicide\\_prevention/data.asp](http://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/suicide_prevention/data.asp).

<sup>3</sup> Cherian, K.N., Keynan, J.N., Anker, L. et al. Magnesium–ibogaine therapy in veterans with traumatic brain injuries. *Nat Med* 30, 373–381 (2024). <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41591-023-02705-w>

<sup>4</sup> Davis AK, Averill LA, Sepeda ND, Barsuglia JP, Amoroso T. Psychedelic Treatment for Trauma-Related Psychological and Cognitive Impairment Among US Special Operations Forces Veterans. *Chronic Stress*. 2020;4. doi:10.1177/2470547020939564

<sup>5</sup> Gukasyan, Natalie, et al. "Efficacy and Safety of Psilocybin-Assisted Treatment for Major Depressive Disorder: Prospective 12-Month Follow-Up." *Journal of Psychopharmacology*, vol. 36, no. 2, 15 Feb. 2022, pp. 151–158, [journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/02698811211073759](https://doi.org/10.1177/02698811211073759), <https://doi.org/10.1177/02698811211073759>.

<sup>6</sup> "VA.gov | Veterans Affairs." *Va.gov*, 26 Mar. 2025, [www.ptsd.va.gov/understand\\_tx/mdma\\_assisted\\_therapy.asp](http://www.ptsd.va.gov/understand_tx/mdma_assisted_therapy.asp).

Since 2020, 16 states have passed psychedelic-assisted therapy legislation supporting clinical research, establishing regulated access programs, creating task forces and commissions to assess PAT and prepare recommendations for future action, and making regulatory reforms to remove barriers to research and mirror federal FDA and DEA drug rescheduling decisions. Texas was the first state in the nation to fund a clinical trial for the use of psychedelic-assisted therapies, specifically psilocybin, for veterans struggling with PTSD through HB 1802 in 2021. Since then, many other states have followed suit including; Arizona, which supported psilocybin research in 2023 with the passage of SB 1726 and ibogaine research in 2025 with the passage of HB 2871; New Jersey, establishing a Psilocybin Behavioral Health Access and Therapy Pilot Program through SB 2283 in 2025; and Georgia whose FY25 budget allocated \$1,000,000 to Emory University to expand psychedelic research. Texas again led the nation in 2025 with a \$50,000,000 appropriation for ibogaine clinical research and development, the largest public appropriation for psychedelic research in the United States. Currently, 32 states are considering psychedelic-assisted therapy legislation in their state legislatures.

As states across the nation take meaningful steps to advance research and responsibly explore psychedelic-assisted therapies, it is imperative that Congress act at the federal level to support and accelerate these efforts. By providing clear guidance, funding, and regulatory flexibility, the federal government can remove barriers to research, ensure safe and equitable access for veterans, and help translate promising scientific findings into real-world treatments. Coordinated federal leadership will ensure that our nation's defenders are not left behind while states explore innovative solutions to address the urgent mental health crisis facing our veterans.

We envision a future where bold alliances, evidence-based treatments, and unwavering advocacy ensure that all who wear the uniform are able to thrive following their service to our nation. We believe this can be accomplished by:

- Advocating for evidence-based treatments and expanding access to innovative therapies proven to effectively address service-related conditions such as PTSD and TBI.
- Confronting the veteran suicide epidemic by tackling the root causes of veteran suicide by educating stakeholders, supporting research, advocating for policy change, and expanding access to care.
- Building a collaborative network, uniting organizations, researchers, advocates, and policymakers committed to improving the lives of all who've served in a coalition to create change.
- Driving policy reform with veteran leadership, science-backed research, and proven strategy.

We believe veterans deserve access to the highest quality, cutting edge, and evidenced based treatments. Across the country, psychedelic-assisted therapy is showing exceptional promise for conditions like TBI, PTSD, and depression—especially among veterans for whom traditional treatments fall short. Clinical and observational studies continue to reveal outcomes far beyond conventional standards.

In closing, VALOR remains steadfast in its commitment to advancing meaningful solutions to the veteran mental health crisis. We strongly support expanded research efforts—both public and private—into innovative treatment modalities that demonstrate credible therapeutic promise. Additionally, we urge Congress to examine and remove unnecessary regulatory or statutory barriers that impede rigorous scientific study of compounds that may offer transformative healing for our nation’s defenders. Our veterans deserve a research environment guided by evidence, urgency, and compassion, ensuring that safe and effective treatments can be responsibly evaluated and, when appropriate, made accessible.

The VALOR Coalition is appreciative of the opportunity to submit comments for the record. We thank you for your leadership and commitment to our nation’s heroes.



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— Strength in Unity. Change in Action. —