



Statement for the Record

Chairwoman Miller-Meeke, Ranking Member Brownley, and members of the Health Subcommittee:

At The Up Center, we are profoundly committed to breaking down barriers to mental health care for veterans and providing lifesaving, timely support. Today, I'm writing to urge your support for H.R. 2283, the Recognizing Community Organizations for Veteran Engagement and Recovery Act (RECOVER Act), a critical bill that addresses the mental health crisis among veterans.

Veterans are 1.7x more likely to die by suicide than civilians, with an average of 17.5 suicides a day. Many VA facilities are overwhelmed, often resulting in wait times exceeding the 20-day standard. This highlights the urgent need for innovative, data-driven solutions to help reduce the veteran suicide rate. Nonprofit community-based mental health clinics are uniquely positioned to fill the gaps in care, providing the timely, culturally competent, evidence-based care that veterans urgently need.

The RECOVER Act would establish a three-year pilot program to demonstrate whether evidence-based mental health care delivered by nonprofit outpatient mental health facilities improves outcomes.

Key Benefits of the Bill Include:

1. **Timely, Accessible Care:** Reducing wait times and ensuring veterans can receive support when they need it most.
2. **Culturally Competent Support:** Addressing unique mental health challenges related to PTSD, combat trauma, and military sexual trauma.
3. **Strengthening VA Partnerships:** Enhancing collaboration to reduce the overburden on VA facilities while preserving access to VA services.

By supporting this legislation, you'll play a pivotal role in expanding access to life-changing care for veterans and significantly lowering the risk of mental health crises, including suicide. Thank you for your continued support for U.S. military veterans and attention to this matter.

Warm regards,

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