



Brett Waters, Esq.

Co-Founder & Executive Director, Reason for Hope

Co-Founder, Veteran Mental Health Leadership Coalition

Brett Waters, Esq. is the co-founder and Executive Director of Reason for Hope and the co-founder of the Veteran Mental Health Leadership Coalition (“VMHLC”). His work focuses on policy and grass-roots patient advocacy to increase psychedelic research funding, reduce unnecessary regulatory barriers, and safely increase access to evidence-based psychedelic therapies, particularly for those who have not benefitted from existing treatments for mental and behavioral health conditions. Reason for Hope is named in memory of Brett’s mother, Sherrie Hope Waters, who he lost to suicide in 2018. Brett also lost his grandfather (Sherrie’s father) – a World War II Veteran – to suicide when he was young.

Brett earned his J.D. from New York University School of Law, after which he spent five years as an antitrust litigation associate at Winston & Strawn in New York City. He previously served as Policy and Advocacy Chair for the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, NYC Chapter. Brett’s advocacy through Reason for Hope and VMHLC helped unlock more than \$12 million in state funding this year, primarily for advancing research into MDMA-assisted therapy and psilocybin therapy (both designated as FDA Breakthrough Therapies), and for the training of healthcare professionals in this specialized form of care delivery. He recently participated in hearings before the Kentucky Opioid Abatement Advisory Commission in support of a proposal to allocate \$42 million for the research and development of ibogaine for opioid use disorder.