86R20291 JGH-D

By:  Landgraf H.C.R. No. 148

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, The veterans of the armed forces of the United States experience post-traumatic stress disorder and commit suicide at rates far higher than the general population; and

WHEREAS, The men and women who bear arms in our defense regularly face traumatic situations that are not necessarily unique to military life but are certainly more prevalent, ranging from violent and life-threatening experiences to sexual harassment and assault; and

WHEREAS, Between 7 and 8 percent of the general population experience PTSD at some point in their lives, but veterans are afflicted at rates that range from 12 percent for those who took part in the Gulf War to between 11 and 20 percent for veterans of Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom; approximately 15 percent of Vietnam veterans are currently diagnosed with PTSD, and nearly a third of them have experienced the condition over the course of their lifetimes; and

WHEREAS, The aftermath of trauma can manifest itself as depression, outbursts of anger, and substance abuse, but the most tragic consequence is suicide; from 2008 to 2016, more than 6,000 veterans each year took their own lives; moreover, in 2016, the suicide rate for veterans was 26.1 per 100,000 as opposed to 17.4 for non-veteran adults, when adjusted for age and gender; and

WHEREAS, Suicide and other consequences of PTSD affect not only the veterans themselves, but also their families, friends, and communities; in an effort to address this urgent problem, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, the Department of Defense, the Department of Homeland Security, the National Action Alliance for Suicide Prevention, and many veterans and private sector organizations are working to expand treatment and prevention services; these initiatives can be furthered by increasing public awareness of the issue and by engaging the active support of a broad spectrum of concerned citizens; and

WHEREAS, Americans owe those men and women who sacrificed so much on our behalf an eternal debt of gratitude, and it is essential that our veterans receive the assistance they need to enhance their well-being and their ability to live long and fulfilling lives; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the 86th Legislature of the State of Texas hereby designate June as Veteran Suicide and PTSD Awareness Month; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That, in accordance with the provisions of Section 391.004(d), Government Code, this designation remain in effect until the 10th anniversary of the date this resolution is finally passed by the legislature.