

118TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. RES. 1510

Expressing support for “Military Sexual Trauma Awareness Day”.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SEPTEMBER 25, 2024

Ms. HOULAHAN (for herself, Mr. BACON, Ms. BROWNLEY, Ms. SHERRILL, Mrs. KIM of California, Ms. PINGREE, and Ms. BUDZINSKI) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Armed Services, and in addition to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

RESOLUTION

Expressing support for “Military Sexual Trauma Awareness Day”.

Whereas military sexual trauma (hereinafter, “MST”) encompasses sexual assault or repeated, threatening sexual harassment that occurs during military service;

Whereas MST affects both women and men in the Armed Forces, with research indicating that approximately 1 in 3 women and 1 in 50 men experience MST during service as a member, whether active duty, Reserve, or National Guard;

Whereas MST is an experience rather than a diagnosis or mental health condition, and can result in significant and

long-lasting impacts on survivors, including heightened risks of post-traumatic stress disorder (hereinafter, “PTSD”), depression, anxiety, substance abuse, and physical health issues, with an increased risk of suicide;

Whereas MST survivors who identify as members of marginalized and minority groups may face additional stressors and barriers to engaging in MST-related care which may compound the trauma and hinder their access to necessary support;

Whereas MST survivors often encounter feelings of being unsupported, disrespected, or retraumatized when seeking care, which can exacerbate their psychological distress and elevate the risk of suicide, highlighting the urgent need for reforms to ensure they receive compassionate and respectful treatment;

Whereas MST not only affects the individual but also impacts their families, friends, and overall military readiness, as the trauma can strain relationships and affect the survivor’s ability to perform effectively within the military setting;

Whereas there is a critical need to address the stigma associated with MST and to provide comprehensive support that considers the needs of survivors, their families, and the broader military community;

Whereas there is an urgent need for the Armed Forces to intensify efforts to prevent MST by implementing comprehensive training programs, promoting a culture of zero tolerance, and strengthening reporting and support mechanisms to protect all members and ensure a safer military environment; and

Whereas September 25, 2024, is observed as “Military Sexual Trauma Awareness Day”: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

2 (1) expresses support for “Military Sexual
3 Trauma Awareness Day”;

4 (2) affirms its commitment to supporting mili-
5 tary sexual trauma survivors and acknowledges the
6 importance of providing them with the highest qual-
7 ity care and support;

8 (3) acknowledges the profound impact of mili-
9 tary sexual trauma, commits to breaking the stigma
10 surrounding it, and reaffirms its dedication to im-
11 proving support systems for military sexual trauma
12 survivors and their families;

13 (4) encourages the Department of Defense and
14 Department of Veterans Affairs to continue efforts
15 to expand access to military sexual trauma-related
16 services, ensuring these services are well-publicized
17 and accessible to all veterans;

18 (5) promotes transparency and accountability in
19 the Department of Defense’s and the Department of
20 Veterans Affairs’ handling of military sexual trauma
21 cases to build trust and ensure that survivors receive
22 the support they need without fear of retaliation or
23 discrimination; and

1 (6) underscores its commitment to working with
2 the Department of Defense to address root problems
3 and causes of military sexual trauma with the goal
4 of eradicating it.

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