



HONOR FOR ALL

January 24, 2012

President Barack Obama
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, DC

Dear President Obama:

Honor for ALL, a 501(c)3 non-profit organization, is dedicated to establishing visible recognition of the invisible wounds of Post-traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), Mild Traumatic Brain Injury (mTBI), depression, and survivor's guilt. Our mission is to end the associated stigma, restore equity in the employment domain, preserve the dignity of families, and, most importantly, stop the tragic loss from suicide of veterans and family members suffering these wounds.

The adoption of Senate Resolutions #541 in 2010 and #202 in 2011 designating June 27 as National Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder Awareness Day, your decision to reverse the policy on condolence letters for service members lost to suicide in a war zone, and authoritative statements such as yours to the American Legion last August that the days of depression and PTSD being stigmatized must end, are important steps toward universal recognition for invisible wounds. Still, much is left to be done before all citizens understand the realities of these wounds. Much is left to be reconciled before our current veterans can comfortably re-enter their communities.

Please consider the following:

As our troops conclude their mission in Iraq and make the transition home, the impact of nearly ten years of combat will continue with mounting cases of veterans struggling to overcome the effects of PTSD, TBI, depression and survivor's guilt. Tragically coupled with this, our veterans face discrimination in the workforce, alienation from friends and family, homelessness, and, most grievous of all, persistent thoughts of suicide. This terrible progression of despair is predominately the result of misunderstanding and misinformation - the stigma of these

invisible wounds. Bringing an end to this culture of silence and avoidance is the reason for this letter.

Our military and VA have both taken a proactive position on this issue with increasingly positive results. However, as soon as a veteran steps off post or out of the clinic, that progress and support rapidly dissipate. This is more than just a military matter. We are all involved. Not until society at large understands the realities of invisible wounds can this stigma be defeated.

In recent years, we have seen another stigma - that surrounding breast cancer - successfully removed from our culture. Much of this achievement was accomplished through the efforts the American Cancer Society and the Susan G. Komen for the Cure organization, but it was not without the help of many high-ranking public officials, including presidents. Several Federal Advisory Committees were formed by the Executive Branch and twice included Nancy Brinker, founder of Komen for the Cure. These presidential panels were instrumental in channeling public concern into action. A wellspring of affiliation, they brought about effective collaboration and lasting impact on public opinion. Today, the complicated and pressing affliction of invisible wounds deserves the same official overview.

Across our nation numerous public and private organizations are anxious to help, but collectively they lack coordination, and individually they lack the clout, to act effectively. Clearly, as a fundamental step toward consolidating this potential, the establishment of a Federal Advisory Committee should again be taken under consideration.

I, along with the co-signers listed below, ask that you establish, under the authority of the Federal Advisory Committee Act, Title 5 U.S.C., as did President Clinton in 1995 to study Gulf War veterans' illnesses, a committee comprised of qualified professionals and distinguished laymen to advise on the present exigency facing our veterans and nation. We ask that you put the establishment of this committee on a fast track, that it report directly to you, and that you personally lead us to end the stigma that has been attached to the psychological consequences of service on the field of battle.

The guiding principle for the work of the Committee should be to improve the individual health and family welfare of all service members, past, present, and future, having, or perceived as having, the invisible wounds of Post-traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), Mild Traumatic Brain Injury (mTBI), depression, or survivor's guilt.

With conviction, dedication and collaboration we can conquer the stigma, save and improve the lives of the wounded, restore dignity to their families, and bring understanding to all.

Sincerely,



Thomas Mahany
President, Honor for ALL

eldonstone@wowway.com

/Cosigned by:

The Honorable Thomas E. White, BG (Ret), US Army, USMA 1967, former Secretary of the US Army
The Honorable Malcolm R. O'Neil, former Assistant Secretary of the Army
LTC (Ret) Ronald Eric Ray, US Army, Medal of Honor Recipient, Vietnam Veteran
SSgt Jeremiah Workman, US Marine Corps, Recipient of the Navy Cross, OIF Veteran

VADM (Ret) Norb Ryan, USN, President, Military Officers Association of America
LTG (Ret) Harry E. Soyster, USA, Purple Heart Recipient
MG (Ret) Leo M Childs, USA, former Chief of Signal
MG (Ret) Alan Salisbury, USA, USMA 1958, Founder and Chairman, Code of Support Foundation
MG (Ret) O.B. Sewall, USA
RADM (Ret) William W. Cobb Jr., USN, USNA 1968, Vice President, General Dynamics,
RADM (Ret) Edward Masso, USN, Chairman of the Board, Not Alone
BG (Ret) Edward F. Rodriguez Jr., USAF
BG (Ret) James R. Ralph, Jr., USA
BG (Ret) Clarke M Brintall, USA, Wounded Warrior Mentor Program

Gregg Keesling, contributor to Presidential policy on Letters of Condolence for victims of suicide within
a war zone, father of suicide victim Spc Chancellor Keesling, US Army
Kim Ruocco, MSW, Manager for Suicide Outreach and Education Programs, Tragedy Assistance
Programs for Survivors (TAPS), wife of suicide victim Major John Ruocco, USMC
Matthew Leaf, OEF/OIF Veteran, witness to suicide of combat comrade SSgt Joseph Biel, US Army,
June 27, SSgt Biel's birthday, has been designated as National PTSD Awareness Day

Dr. Frank Ochberg, former Associate Director of the National Institute of Mental Health
Dr. William P. Nash, former Navy psychiatrist, combat stress researcher and author
Bonnie Carroll, Founder and President, Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS)
Susan H. Connors, President/CEO, Brain Injury Association of America
Mike Jones, former Cpt, US Army, OIF Veteran, Executive Director, Not Alone
Kristina Kaufmann, Executive Director, Code of Support

Paul Rieckhoff, Founder and Executive Director, Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America
Mark Robbins, Executive Director, Yellow Ribbon Fund
Pam Derrow, Executive Director, Comfort for America's Uniformed Service (CAUSE)
Tara E. Crooks, Co-Founder, Army Wife Network, Author, *1001 Things to Love About Military Life*
Dr. Christal Presley, Author and Founder of United Children of Veterans
Linda Kelly, President, John Kinzinger, VP, John Lockwood, WW Consultant, Operation Never Forgotten

James Gandolfini, Jon Alpert, Tom Richardson, and Matthew O'Neil, HBO's *Wartorn*
Jay Ungar and Molly Mason, Musicians
Gwen Weiner, Director, EOS Foundation
Allan Horlick, President and General Manager, WUSA9 TV, Washington, DC
Mike Walter, Documentary Filmmaker, creator of *Breaking News, Breaking Down*

Dr. Jeffrey Rosenberg, Michael Humphries, RN, and Eugene Pyatenko, Prizm Pain Management
Senior Vice-Commander Gilbert Grylls, VFW Post 2216, Staunton, VA
Anthony Asher, CEO, Sullivan, Ward, Asher & Patton, P.C
Mary and Patrick E. Lynch, Former President National Funeral Directors Association
Mai Fernandez, Executive Director of the National Center for Victims of Crime

Michael J. Asher, Attorney, Sullivan, Ward, Asher & Patton, P.C
Maj (Ret) Rick Briggs, US Air Force, Veterans Program Manager, Brain Injury Association of Michigan
Vito A Pampalona, Yellow Ribbon Fund - National Chairman Ambassador Program
Janet and Dr. Ellsworth Levine, Former Captain, US Air Force
Judith Broder MD, Founder/Director, The Soldiers Project, 2011 Presidential Citizens Award Medal

R. Drew Fezzey, Music Producer and Filmmaker
Carrie Fox, President, C. Fox Communications
Catherine Wallace, Small Business Owner
Judy Weiner, Small Business Owner
Paul Loes, Small Business Owner

John F. Linehan, Jr., 101st Airborne, US Army, Vietnam Veteran
Steve Robinson, Retired Army Ranger, Veteran and Advocate
Thomas Phillips, Wounded Warrior/Navy, Desert Storm Veteran, SDVOSB
Lennie A. Fine, USMC, Vietnam Veteran

LTC (Ret) Ron Capps, Founder and Director, Veterans Writing Project
LTC (Ret) Edward R. Lynch, AROTC, 1983
LTC (Ret) Kathleen L. Lynch, AROTC, 1983
LTC (Ret) Thomas J. Lynch, USMA, 1982
1LT (Ret) John Harry Jorgenson, USMA 1967, former Counsel to Inspector General, Federal Reserve
Terry Atkinson, Former Capt US Army, USMA 1967, Vietnam Veteran
Thomas Beierschmitt, Former Capt US Army, USMA 1968, Vietnam Veteran

LTC (Ret) John M. Greathouse, USMA 1969, Vietnam Veteran, Director, Monticello Capital
LTC (Ret) James T. Fouché Jr, USMA 1969, Vietnam Veteran
Michael D. Healy, Former Captain US Army, USMA 1969
Pete Dencker, Former Major US Army, USMA 1969, Vietnam Veteran, Purple Heart Recipient
Robert W. Haines, former Major US Army, USMA 1969
LTC (Ret) F. Chris Sautter, USMA 1969, Vietnam Veteran
LTC (Ret) John R. Hamilton III, USMA 1969, Vietnam Veteran, Double Purple Heart Recipient