

**The American Legion
Department of Nebraska**

RESOLUTION

Resolution No. 422a

Subject: Veteran Suicide Awareness
and Prevention Training

Submitted by: D11

Referred to:
(1) VR&R CMTE

WHEREAS, One of the basic purposes of The American Legion is “our devotion to mutual helpfulness”; and

WHEREAS, Part of the Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Commission’s purpose is to ensure that veterans and their families receive the highest quality of care for their injuries and illnesses incurred from their military service; and

WHEREAS, The American Legion motto is “Veterans Strengthening America”; and
WHEREAS, As members of The American Legion, we have a sacred obligation to leave no veteran behind; ensuring that our veterans are cared for; and

WHEREAS, Current veteran suicides average 22 per day and the 2021 Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) National Suicide Prevention Report indicated that in 2019, the adjusted rate for veterans was 52.3% greater than non-Veteran U.S. adults; and

WHEREAS, The 2021 VA National Suicide Prevention Report stated that 45,861 U.S. adults committed suicide and 6,261 of these were veterans; and

WHEREAS, The White House released a national strategy on November 3, 2021, for preventing veteran suicide, purporting that it would harness the full breadth of the federal government to tackle the issue; this strategy aims to limit barriers to mental health care; and

WHEREAS, The VA has a gatekeeper training program provided by VA suicide prevention coordinators to veterans and those who serve veterans; and

WHEREAS, Other organizations have developed very successful and valuable suicide awareness and prevention training programs; and

WHEREAS, The American Legion is developing an action oriented campaign to change the narrative of veteran suicide; and

WHEREAS, The American Legion encourages suicide prevention training; Resolution No. 58(NEC, May 7-8, 2003), Subject: "Youth Suicide Prevention Education" resolves to increase youth suicide awareness by encouraging schools to implement youth suicide prevention programs; and

WHEREAS, Resolution No. 238 (NEC, August 30-31, September 1, 2016), Subject: "Suicide Prevention for American Veterans Act" urged the U.S. Congress to pass and the President to sign into law an Act to expand and improve care provided to veterans at risk for suicide; and

WHEREAS, There is an urgent need for trained Legionnaires at the post level to intervene in veteran suicide situations in their community; and

WHEREAS, This will enhance awareness and increase the likelihood of recognizing signs of veterans and community members at risk of suicide; and

WHEREAS, Posts can be empowered to prevent as many veteran suicides as possible while working with national and local agencies to return veterans to their community with a sense of belonging and purpose for a safe and productive life; and

WHEREAS, Legionnaires and members of the American Legion Family have the desire and the ability to save lives; they need to be given the appropriate tools so they can make a difference in saving a life; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By The American Legion, Department of Nebraska, in regular convention assembled in Columbus, Nebraska, on June 23, 24, 25, 26, 2022, that Department of Nebraska strongly encourages suicide awareness and prevention training at the post level; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That **Districts are strongly encouraged to seek out qualified trainers and invite them to provide training for their Legionnaires and members of the American Legion Family.**