

5,520 Flags on National Mall For Vets Lost to Suicide

WASHINGTON, DC (October 3, 2018) – This morning, from 9am to 1pm EST, Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America, the leading post-9/11 veterans empowerment organization, is mobilizing grassroots members on the National Mall to bring awareness and attention to the urgent issue of veteran suicide. IAVA members and allies are planting 5,520 flags representing every veteran and military suicide that occurred this year so far. At noon, IAVA will hold a press conference on the the east side of the Washington Monument (101 14th street NW, Washington, DC 20560). Members of Congress, the White House, VA, DoD and the military are expected – and the public is invited to join us.

Twenty veteran and military suicides every day is twenty too many and IAVA will stand with our partners and allies to call attention to this issue. In 2014, [we did a similar activation](#) that generated national media, jump-started a national conversation and announced the introduction of the [Clay Hunt Suicide Prevention for America's Veterans \(SAV\) Act](#). In the four years since, the Clay Hunt SAV Act was passed, mental health and suicide prevention programs nationwide expanded, and community-based solutions and predictive analytics have been incorporated into suicide prevention measures. But still, the numbers remain troubling. And still, we must bring attention to this public health crisis.

“Too many of our men and women are dying”, **said Paul Rieckhoff, IAVA Founder and CEO** . “Every day, IAVA and our partners and allies are working to support hundreds of thousands of veterans facing transitional challenges after combat. We can’t fight this problem alone. We need reinforcements of the greatest magnitude. We need a national call to action from the top that mobilizes all Americans. In response to this ongoing crisis, we need immediate action from the Commander-In-Chief, Secretaries of Defense and VA, and all Americans. There’s plenty of urgent news out of Washington this week dominating headlines. This news is a matter of life and death and must not be overlooked. And unlike almost every other issue in Washington, this one could unite leaders of all parties. We invite the President and all concerned citizens to join us on the National Mall to focus awareness, support and action on this silent enemy that is taking the lives of our fellow Americans every single day.”

WHAT: An Activation on the National Mall where IAVA members and allies will place 5,520 flags to visually represent all veteran and military suicides to date in 2018.

WHEN: This morning, Oct 3, 2018 from 9:00 AM – 1:00 PM. Press conference on location beginning at 12 PM. Press availability throughout the morning (set-up with volunteers begins at 7:00 AM). Please contact press@iava.org for questions.

WHERE: Washington DC National Mall, 101 14th street, NW Washington, DC 20560 (the east side of the Washington Monument).

