

# [More Young Veterans Dying By Suicide, VA Data Shows](#)

**NEW YORK, NY (September 26, 2018)** – Today, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) released important new findings from its most recent analysis of 2005-2016 suicide rates for both veteran and non-veteran populations and the results overwhelmingly demonstrate that it's long past time to make this issue a true public health and national security priority. Among the key findings from today's report:

- Veterans accounted for 14% of all deaths by suicide in the US though comprising only 8.1% of the population 18 years and older.
- In 2016, the rate of suicide among veterans was 1.5 times higher than in the non-veteran cohort; The rate for male veterans was 1.4 times higher than civilian matched cohort while rate among women vets was 1.8 higher.
- Firearms were used in almost 70% of veteran deaths by suicide.

**“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 latest VA information, 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 next Wednesday 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.”

[Read the full report here.](#)

Tomorrow, [IAVA will deliver written testimony](#) to the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs on the subject of Veteran Suicide Prevention – Maximizing Effectiveness and Increasing Awareness.

**In IAVA's most recent [Member Survey](#), 65 percent of respondents know at least one Iraq or Afghanistan veteran who has attempted suicide, while 58 percent of respondents know someone who has died by suicide. A staggering 37 percent of respondents have thought about taking their own life since joining the military.**

Next week, from October 1st – October 5th, IAVA will be leading its Fall [Storm the Hill](#) grassroots advocacy activation in Washington, DC. IAVA member veterans and leaders from across the country will converge on in our

nation's capital for a week of advocacy, unity and impact. As we have for years, IAVA will focus on bringing attention to and fighting for our [Campaign To Combat Suicide Among Troops and Veterans](#). This is number one in our 2018 [Big 6](#) advocacy priority areas that our members see as the most pressing.

To highlight the ongoing urgency of the veteran suicide crisis, on Wednesday October 3rd, IAVA will execute a suicide awareness activation on the National Mall, [similar to one we did in 2014](#). IAVA members and allies will plant thousands of flags representing every veteran and military suicide that occurred this year so far. This will be followed by a press conference on the mall at noon. If you'd like to join us, we will be on the east side of the Washington Monument, next to 14th Street, NW starting at 9AM ET. To learn more, visit our [Storm The Hill page](#).

The [Big 6](#) is an urgent call to Congress, the White House, and all Americans to stand with IAVA now to tackle veteran suicide, support women vets, defend the GI Bill, invest in and protect VA and DoD reform, sound the alarm on burn pits and empower veterans to utilize medical cannabis.