NEW YORK, NY (October 8, 2017) – Today, after Vice President Pence walked out of an NFL game in Indianapolis and President Trump tweeted about it, Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America (IAVA), the non-partisan organization and leading voice of the Post-9/11 generation of veterans, with over 400,000 members nationwide, unveiled the findings of the first and most comprehensive national poll of veterans and military personnel on the recent protests in the NFL. More than 8,000 veterans and servicemembers responded to this groundbreaking poll, which overall showed that opinions on the protests span the spectrum.

The data, available online here, revealed that 98% of service members and veterans polled believe the First Amendment protects the right to peacefully protest. 62% believe NFL players have the right to peacefully protest during a game. It also found that many disagree with both President Trump and the NFL’s response to the protests and that many will boycott the NFL outright. Most polled also felt that many other issues facing America are more urgent right now.

“Much of America is talking about the protests in the NFL. And many people are claiming to speak on behalf of veterans and troops. We wanted to give veterans and troops the opportunity to speak for themselves. The most important takeaway from this groundbreaking data is that there is no monolithic veteran opinion. The opinions of veterans are often as diverse as those of all Americans,” said Paul Rieckhoff, Founder and CEO of IAVA. “However, veterans can play a unique and important leadership role in America, especially in moments that test our national unity. We have invaluable experience and perspective—especially around questions of patriotism. We hope this data and our voices will add light to a discussion so far dominated by heat. IAVA and our members are standing by to be a voice of perspective, experience and unity. And we are completely committed to doing all that we can help move America forward.”

**Methodology:** Emails were sent to IAVA’s veteran members inviting them to participate in IAVA’s poll on the NFL protests. The poll was available from 9/30-10/2/17. Over 8,000, service members and veterans participated. The margin of error for this poll is +/- 1.1 percentage points at the 95% confidence level. This response is the largest that IAVA has seen in our polling history, and represents only data collected from the military and veteran community.

**IAVA Research:** Led by Dr. Jacqueline Maffucci, PhD, IAVA’s Research Department uses real data to drive the development of scalable solutions to benefit veterans and their families. Through careful analysis of IAVA’s annual Member Survey and continuous surveillance of data about service members, veterans and their families, IAVA’s Research Department informs the
development of IAVA advocacy campaigns and programs. IAVA’s groundbreaking 2017 annual Member Survey will be released later this month; details to come.

**Do you believe the Constitution protects the right to peacefully protest?**

- 98% Agree
- 1% Disagree
- 1% Unsure

**Do you believe professional athletes have a first amendment right to peacefully protest during games?**

- 62% Agree
- 34% Disagree
- 4% Unsure

Data gathered from 8018 service members and veterans by IAVA’s Research Department between 9/30/17 - 10/2/17

**What issues do you believe are most pressing for the White House and Congress to address?**

1. Hurricane disaster response
2. Recent threats from North Korea
3. Veteran suicide
4. The war against ISIS
5. Reforming VA health care

Data gathered from 8018 service members and veterans by IAVA’s Research Department between 9/30/17 - 10/2/17
Do you agree with President Trump’s response to the protests?

- 43% Agree
- 48% Disagree
- 9% Unsure

Do you agree with the NFL’s response to the protests?

- 28% Agree
- 55% Disagree
- 17% Unsure

How do you plan to respond to the various protests during professional sports games?

- 39% will not watch NFL games because they disagree with the protests
- 24% will keep watching/attending NFL games and support their right to protest in this way.
- 14% will keep watching NFL games, but disagree with the protest
- 9% will not watch because they are not NFL fans, but in general object to any protest during our national anthem.
- 9% will not watch because they are not NFL fans, but in general support their right to protest in this way.
- 2% will keep watching/attending NFL games, and have no opinion about the protests
- 1% will not watch because they are not NFL fans, but in general have no opinion about the protests