

to this very serious crisis in our country.

Ms. SINEMA. Thank you so much, Congressman SUOZZI, for your commitment to taking care of veterans in our community.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to my colleague from California, Congresswoman JULIA BROWNLEY.

Congressman JULIA BROWNLEY has served on the Veterans Committee for 5 years now and is the ranking member on the Health Subcommittee for Veterans. She has been doing a yeoman's amount of work to help ensure that our veterans get the care they need when they return home.

Congresswoman, thank you for joining us again.

Ms. BROWNLEY of California. I thank the gentlewoman from Arizona for yielding to me and for organizing this Special Order hour and bringing attention to this very, very important topic.

Mr. Speaker, we are here today, both Republicans and Democrats, because addressing this epidemic of veteran suicide is the highest priority for Members of both parties.

Congressman SUOZZI talked about the fact that Dr. Shulkin, the VA Secretary, has made this his top clinical priority; and by shining a clear light on this topic, I hope we can finally reduce the stigma around mental health issues and be clear about the significant work that still needs to be done to address this devastating epidemic.

We need to do more because 20 veterans commit suicide each day, veterans like Sara Leatherman and Linda Raney and Katie Lynn Cesena. As Congressman Murphy already pointed out, it is also estimated that only 6 of those 20 veterans were receiving VA services.

The VA provides some of the most comprehensive mental healthcare and resources in the Nation, and we need to encourage more veterans to seek care that is available, and we must be ready for them.

We do need more providers, and I support Congressman MURPHY and Congressman SCOTT and others who are advocating for more providers within the VA.

But, unfortunately, whether it is a lack of providers, long wait times, or not enough resources devoted to outreach, we face a serious issue with getting veterans set up with the care that they need. The VA took an important step forward earlier this year by expanding access to its mental healthcare for veterans with other than honorable discharges. That was the right thing to do and the right step, but much more must be done.

One important component of reducing veteran suicide is to better understand which programs have been most successful. The Clay Hunt Act and my bill, the Female Veteran Suicide Prevention Act, required an independent analysis of the VA's suicide prevention and mental health programs to find out what works.

It is critical to break this data up based on gender because, tragically, recent VA data indicates that women veterans are 2½ times more likely to take their own lives than civilian women. Actually, that is a better statistic than last year, because last year it was 6 times more than civilian women. But the reason why that has been reduced, tragically, is because the number of suicides amongst civilian women has increased.

As the population of female veterans continues to grow, the VA needs to recognize their unique experiences and provide the quality healthcare that will address this suicide epidemic. It is clear that women on the battlefield experience the same kind of trauma that men experience on the battlefield, and that may be a very similar experience, but we know that women's experience in the military serving our country can be very, very different, and we need to understand how best to treat both women and men.

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In closing, please let me remind veterans and those who love them that the VA operates a confidential call line that is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Please call. If veterans are listening tonight, please call and have the courage to, if you need that support, make that call your first step. And any veteran and any family member can call.

That phone number is 1-800-273-8255, and then you press number 1. You can also send a text message at 838255. Please, please, if you are in need, please reach out and make this call.

Please know that we are here for you. We are fighting for you. Give us a chance to help you.

Ms. SINEMA. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congresswoman BROWNLEY for her dedication not just to this event every year, but to taking care of veterans at home and here in Washington.

I thank all of the colleagues from both parties who joined us this evening. Our thoughts are with all the families who have lost a loved one to suicide. But our efforts to end veterans' suicide do not end today or even this month. We are committed to continuing this fight to ensure that our veterans always know that they have a place to turn.

We can do more. We need a VA that provides real and meaningful help to veterans in need; a VA that puts veterans first and works aggressively with community providers to improve the quality and accessibility of care. We need a VA that is transparent and open to restore the trust and credibility it has lost. The VA can and must do better. No one deserves our gratitude and respect more than those who put their lives on the line for our freedom. And when the VA fails, our heroes suffer.

We, who enjoy freedom every day, thanks to the sacrifices of our military servicemen and -women, must all step up to end the epidemic of veteran suicide.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

PRINTING OF PROCEEDINGS OF FORMER MEMBERS PROGRAM

Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania (during the Special Order of Ms. SINEMA). Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the proceedings during the former Members program be printed in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD and that all Members and former Members who spoke during the proceedings have the privilege of revising and extending their remarks.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. DONOVAN). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Pennsylvania?

There was no objection.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Mrs. Curtis, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed without amendment a bill of the House of the following title:

H.R. 3819. An act to amend title 38, United States Code, to extend certain expiring provisions of law administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

REQUISITES FOR IMPEACHMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. AL GREEN) for 30 minutes.

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight to make one point. That one point is that a President need not be convicted of a criminal offense to be impeached; in fact, need not be charged with a criminal offense; need not be charged with a statutory offense; need not be charged with a codified offense to be impeached.

But before I make this point, Mr. Speaker, I have to acknowledge that I am always in awe of this well, and I don't take for granted this great opportunity that has been accorded me to stand in the well of the Congress of the United States of America. I believe that those of us who have been so blessed should acknowledge our blessings. This is a blessing.

Mr. Speaker, there are many people who don't have this opportunity, so I am going to take one liberty before going into my message. I just want people to know what I see as I stand here in the well of the Congress of the United States of America.

As I look forward, Mr. Speaker, I would have those who have not had the opportunity to stand here to know that there is above the doors at the second level a depiction of Moses the Lawgiver.

I would have people know, Mr. Speaker, that behind me, of course, is the flag of the United States of America.

And I would have persons know, Mr. Speaker, that we have these two podiums, and that, typically, Democrats