

116TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. RES. 483

Recognizing the importance and effectiveness of veteran-to-veteran sponsorship programs.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JULY 10, 2019

Mr. GALLAGHER (for himself and Mr. KIND) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs

RESOLUTION

Recognizing the importance and effectiveness of veteran-to-veteran sponsorship programs.

Whereas approximately 200,000 veterans discharge from the military every year, many experiencing difficulty transitioning from active duty to civilian life;

Whereas many veterans experience a heightened risk for depression, isolation, post-traumatic stress disorder, confusion, or suicidal ideation during the transition period;

Whereas evidence-based practices such as veteran-to-veteran peer support have proven to be effective in easing the transition to civilian life;

Whereas the National Alliance on Mental Illness has recognized that veteran-to-veteran counseling increases self-esteem, social functioning, and life satisfaction;

Whereas the Veterans Health Administration of the Department of Veterans Affairs has recognized that veteran-to-veteran counseling improves social functioning, quality of life, independence, ability to deal with mental illness, communication skills, employment outcomes, and the effectiveness of the mental health delivery system;

Whereas peer-to-peer veteran sponsorship programs help establish a welcoming environment that is more conducive for a positive transition to civilian life;

Whereas veteran-to-veteran sponsorship programs are not an intervention, but a guiding hand to assist veterans;

Whereas the Federal Government can aid in mitigating emotional, physical, and social challenges for veterans struggling with transition through support for veteran-to-veteran sponsorship programs; and

Whereas veteran-to-veteran sponsorship programs have been established in communities in Northeastern Wisconsin and throughout the State, by a variety of entities including—

(1) Brown County, Wisconsin, which hosts the Northeast Wisconsin Battalion, one of the first veteran-to-veteran sponsorship programs of its kind in the State;

(2) the 72 County Veterans Service Officers serving every county of Wisconsin, and 11 Tribal Veterans Service Officers serving Native American veterans, who are examples of veterans helping veterans;

(3) La Crosse, Wisconsin, home to the La Crosse Area Veterans Mentor Program (LAVMP) which offers peer-to-peer mentorship and support for veterans struggling with substance abuse, homelessness, and social reintegration, offering support through Veterans Treatment Courts, a Veteran Community Health Worker, Peer Sup-

port Specialists, and initiating a Peer Advisory for Veteran Education program at Western Technical College;

(4) the Department of Veterans Affairs, which offers a transition specialist program, acknowledging the necessity of assisting veterans transition to civilian life;

(5) Outagamie County, Wisconsin, which is home to a veteran-focused nonprofit, Veterans' Mentor Group, to support other veterans, recruit new veteran mentors, provide training and coordinate with the Veterans Treatment Court Coordinator, in addition to being a resource for other veterans from within the community who may find themselves in need;

(6) the military, which offers transition assistance programs to assist veterans with the transition to civilian life;

(7) the University of Wisconsin System, which offers Vets for Vets, a student organization of veterans for veterans to assist with counseling and benefit information;

(8) the University of Wisconsin Madison, which offers Peer Advisory for Veteran Education (PAVE), a peer-to-peer advising program that helps student veterans connect with other veterans, transition to college, and meet their personal and academic goals; and

(9) the Fox Valley Technical College, as well as many University of Wisconsin campuses, which offer Student Veterans of America Chapters which are student-based mentoring programs: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

2 (1) recognizes the importance, effectiveness,
3 and need for veteran-to-veteran sponsorship pro-

1 grams among existing programs and agencies of the
2 Federal Government; and
3 (2) encourages the use and practice of veteran
4 to-veteran programs within the Federal Government
5 and Congress.

