

Wounded Warrior Project Submits Statement for the Record before HVAC Subcommittee on Health **Pending Legislation Advances WWP Policy Priorities**

Washington, D.C. (April 23, 2015) – Wounded Warrior Project® (WWP) submitted a Statement for the Record before the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs (HVA) Subcommittee on Health on pending veterans' health--related legislation. Under consideration today, several of the measures directly support WWP's 2015 policy priorities, including access to mental health care, and long--term care and rehabilitation, including fertility.

"In our testimony before the Joint Committees earlier this year, we urged Congress to improve access to mental health care, improve the long--term care needs for catastrophically injured veterans, and enact legislation that would enable couples unable to conceive due to service--incurred illness or injury to start families," said Jeremy Chwat, chief program officer at WWP. "The bills under consideration today meet each of those challenges, and we encourage the Subcommittee's support of these bills."

The bills directly supporting WWP's 2015 policy priorities include:

The COVER Act

The COVER Act would establish a commission to examine the evidence--based therapy treatment model used by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) for treating mental illnesses of veterans. It would also examine the potential benefits of incorporating complementary treatments available in non--VA medical facilities within the community.

"These therapies, as we have seen through our [Independence Program](#) and [Alumni Program](#), show great promise and we believe they would pave the way for increased access to mental health care and therapy," stated Chwat.

The Veterans Access to Extended Care Act of 2015

The Veterans Access to Extended Care Act of 2015 would modify the treatment of agreements entered into by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to furnish nursing home care, adult day health care, or other extended care services. This modification would increase veterans' access to these community--based care providers and help meet the long--term needs of disabled veterans.

"Long--term care is critically important to our warriors, and we are encouraged by the provisions in this bill that would encourage community--based care providers to treat wounded veterans, for their lifetimes and in their communities," added Chwat.

Draft Legislation to Improve Reproductive Treatment

The Subcommittee is also considering a bill that would expand fertility treatment at VA for certain disabled veterans and their spouses. This is a long--standing policy issue for WWP and our warriors, but we also ask that the Subcommittee consider incorporating provisions from the Women Veterans and Families Health Services Act of 2015 before finalizing the text of this bill. The Women Veterans and Families Health Services Act, introduced in the Senate, would also expand the treatment and care provided by VA. Further, the bill would provide fertility

treatment for spouses of severely wounded service members, provide adoption assistance for veteran families, and make permanent a VA veterans child care services pilot program.

“We envision a future in which the most successful, well--adjusted generation of injured service members in our nation’s history not only survives, but thrives,” continued Chwat. “WWP is committed to serving this generation of wounded veterans for a lifetime, and we look forward to continuing our work with Congress and the administration to realize this vision. These important bills recognize and seek to alleviate some of the challenges our veterans, their caregivers, and families face today, and to anticipate their extended needs in the years ahead.”

About Wounded Warrior Project

The mission of Wounded Warrior Project® (WWP) is to honor and empower Wounded Warriors. WWP’s purpose is to raise awareness and to enlist the public’s aid for the needs of injured service members, to help injured servicemen and women aid and assist each other, and to provide unique, direct programs and services to meet their needs. WWP is a national, nonpartisan organization headquartered in Jacksonville, Florida. To get involved and learn more, visit woundedwarriorproject.org.

<https://newsroom.woundedwarriorproject.org/2015-04-23-Wounded-Warrior-Project-Submits-Statement-for-the-Record-before-HVAC-Subcommittee-on-Health>