

Wounded Warrior Project Outlines Veteran Suicide Prevention Efforts to US House Committee

WASHINGTON, Sept. 22, 2021 [/PRNewswire/](#) -- Wounded Warrior Project® (WWP) Chief Program Officer Jennifer Silva testified today before the U.S. House Committee on Veterans' Affairs, where she told members the COVID-19 pandemic and the recent withdrawal from Afghanistan have elevated the challenges surrounding veteran suicide prevention efforts. Silva outlined ways WWP is supporting wounded veterans, including making outreach calls to those who served in Afghanistan. She also shared additional steps Congress and the health care and veteran services communities should take longer term to serve the veteran population.

"Over the first two months of the pandemic, we saw a 38% increase in referrals to our mental health programs and learned that most of the warriors we serve were feeling disconnected and isolated," Silva told the Committee. She explained that over those first two months, WWP made almost 40,000 outreach calls to veterans, an effort that led to more than 50,000 hours of clinical care by the end of the last fiscal year.

"We're following a similar track of outreach to warriors who were deployed to Afghanistan, and after more than 15,000 calls to warriors, we've seen that mental health programming is now the leading request," she said.

[Read WWP's written testimony and recommendations to Congress.](#)

Silva outlined four steps to help prevent veteran suicide in the future: removing barriers to care; investing in the power of peer support, connection, and training; expanding telehealth; and recognizing the impact of poor sleep and physical pain on mental health.

"Fortunately, our community has a growing understanding of protective factors that can help mitigate stressors on wounded veterans," Silva testified. "As WWP has [testified previously](#), mental health treatment works, but there is no one-size-fits-all solution. WWP's approach includes mental health care and support, whole health and wellness, financial security, and connection and social support.

"Wounded Warrior Project thanks the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs, its distinguished members, and all who have contributed perspective and policy recommendations for reducing veteran suicide. We share a sacred obligation to serve our nation's veterans," Silva concluded.

Learn more about [WWP's legislative priorities](#) and how we work with our nation's leaders to improve the lives of wounded veterans and their families.

About Wounded Warrior Project

Since 2003, Wounded Warrior Project® (WWP) has been meeting the growing needs of warriors, their families, and caregivers — helping them achieve their highest ambition. [Learn more.](#)

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