

110TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 3256

To reduce post traumatic stress disorder and other combat-related stress disorders among military personnel, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JULY 31, 2007

Mr. KENNEDY introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Armed Services

A BILL

To reduce post traumatic stress disorder and other combat-related stress disorders among military personnel, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Psychological Kevlar
5 Act of 2007”.

6 **SEC. 2. PURPOSE.**

7 The purpose of this Act is to reduce the number of
8 psychological casualties among military personnel by pro-
9 viding members of the Armed Forces entering combat with
10 the training, supports, and other evidence-based measures

1 necessary to improve their psychological resilience and re-
2 duce their susceptibility to post-traumatic stress disorder
3 and other stress-related psychopathologies.

4 **SEC. 3. PLANS FOR REDUCING POST TRAUMATIC STRESS**
5 **DISORDER.**

6 (a) PLAN FOR PREVENTION.—

7 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Defense
8 shall develop and implement a plan to incorporate
9 evidence-based preventive and early-intervention
10 measures, practices, or procedures that reduce the
11 likelihood that personnel in combat will develop post-
12 traumatic stress disorder or other stress-related
13 psychopathologies (including substance use condi-
14 tions) into—

15 (A) basic and pre-deployment training for
16 enlisted members of the Armed Forces, non-
17 commissioned officers, and officers;

18 (B) combat theater operations; and

19 (C) post-deployment service.

20 (2) UPDATES.—The Secretary of Defense shall
21 update the plan under paragraph (1) periodically to
22 incorporate, as the Secretary considers appropriate,
23 the results of relevant research, including research
24 conducted pursuant to section 4.

1 (b) RESEARCH.—Subject to section 4, the Secretary
2 of Defense shall conduct and fund, in consultation with
3 the Department of Veterans Affairs, the National Insti-
4 tutes of Health, and the National Academy of Sciences,
5 such research as is necessary to develop the plan described
6 in subsection (a).

7 (c) OUTREACH AND EDUCATION.—

8 (1) TRAINING PROGRAM FOR OFFICERS.—The
9 Secretary of Defense shall develop and implement a
10 training program to educate and promote under-
11 standing and awareness among commissioned offi-
12 cers and non-commissioned officers about the signs
13 and risks of combat stress as well as the signs and
14 risks of stress-related psychopathology (including
15 substance use conditions). Training should include
16 decision-making tools for making a referral for fol-
17 low-up care.

18 (2) TRAINING PROGRAM FOR MEDICAL PROFES-
19 SIONALS.—The Secretary of Defense shall develop
20 and implement a training program to educate front-
21 line medical professionals and primary care pro-
22 viders about the signs and risks of combat stress as
23 well as the signs and risks of stress-related psycho-
24 pathology (including substance use conditions).

1 (3) EDUCATION OF MEMBERS OF ARMED
2 FORCES.—The Secretary of Defense shall educate
3 members of the Armed Forces and their families to
4 recognize signs of combat stress, provide members
5 pre-deployment combat stress management training,
6 and increase outreach and access to members and
7 their families about programs and treatment options
8 (such as individual and family therapy) that mitigate
9 the negative impact of combat stress on the return-
10 ing member.

11 **SEC. 4. EVIDENCE-BASED RESEARCH AND TRAINING.**

12 (a) WORKING GROUP.—The Secretary of Defense
13 shall establish, in coordination with the Department of
14 Veterans Affairs, the National Institutes of Health, and
15 the National Academy of Sciences' Institute of Medicine,
16 a working group tasked with researching and developing
17 evidence-based measures, practices, or procedures that re-
18 duce the likelihood that personnel in combat will develop
19 post-traumatic stress disorder or other stress-related psy-
20 chological pathologies (including substance use condi-
21 tions). The working group shall include personnel with ex-
22 perience in a combat theater, and behavioral health per-
23 sonnel who have experience providing treatment to individ-
24 uals with experience in a combat theater.

1 (b) PEER-REVIEWED RESEARCH PROGRAM.—The
2 Secretary of Defense shall establish a new Peer-Reviewed
3 Research program within the Defense Health Program’s
4 research and development function to research and de-
5 velop evidence-based preventive and early intervention
6 measures, practices, or procedures that reduce the likeli-
7 hood that personnel in combat will develop post-traumatic
8 stress disorder or other stress-related psychopathologies
9 (including substance use conditions). There is authorized
10 to be appropriated to carry out this subsection
11 \$50,000,000 for fiscal year 2008 and such sums as may
12 be necessary thereafter.

13 (c) REPORT.—The Secretary of Defense shall submit
14 to Congress annually a report on the following:

15 (1) The status of research conducted under this
16 section.

17 (2) The status of the plan required under sec-
18 tion 3(a) and the expected timeline for the imple-
19 mentation of the plan.

20 (3) After the plan under section 3(a) has been
21 implemented, the status of the implementation, in-
22 cluding measures of the plan’s impact on psycho-
23 logical casualty rates.

24 (d) FACILITATION.—The Secretary of Defense shall
25 take such steps as practicable to facilitate the ability of

- 1 investigators funded under this section to work with ac-
- 2 tive-duty military personnel in the course of their research.

