

August 4, 2022

Dear Members of Congress:

The Senate is readying a congressional resolution to declare the Sunday after Veterans Day as “National Warrior Call Day.” This year that date falls on November 13, 2022. **We are writing to encourage members of the Senate, particularly leadership, to ensure this is passed and the date is made official.**

As former secretaries of the Department of Veterans Affairs, we understand firsthand the challenges active-duty service members and veterans face and the need for their peers, friends, and family to lift them up. With its simple mission imploring Americans – but especially active-duty service members and veterans – to connect with someone who has worn or is currently wearing the uniform and let them know they care – Warrior Call can foster greater connectivity, compassion and better outcomes. It can help arrest the tragic suicide trends that are befalling veterans and active-duty personnel at a rate far more deadly than among civilians.

Support among veteran service organizations underscores the validity of this campaign and the value of recognizing a grassroots initiative occurring *outside* of government programs that can make those programs even more effective.

Warrior Call is designed to address the challenge of military and veteran isolation, which correlates strongly with suicide. Roughly two-thirds of veterans who take their own lives have had no contact with the VA. Not a replacement for full care, Warrior Call helps connect veterans into the VA system and its attendant focus on helping veterans experiencing intense personal problems. It also encourages peer-to-peer contact, which is essential to wellness.

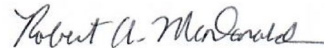
A “warrior call” involves a person making a call to military members and/or a veteran but can also be realized through in-person meetings. The goal is to have individuals “make a call, take a call, and be honest.” As Senator Cotton recently stated, “Support for our troops shouldn't end when they return home—but it doesn't take a new federal program. Sometimes all you need is a call from a friend, family member, or battle buddy. Our resolution will remind Americans that they are the greatest support system for our vets, and that a simple call can make all the difference.”

Passage of this resolution in the Senate will bolster visibility for Warrior Call and help seed the call-to-action at the grass roots “deck plate” level among Americans. In doing so, it will save lives. Thank you for your time and consideration.

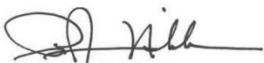
Sincerely yours,



Anthony Principi – 4th U.S. Secretary of Veterans Affairs



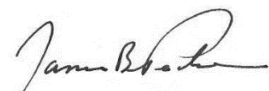
Robert A. McDonald – 8<sup>th</sup> U.S. Secretary of Veterans Affairs



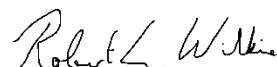
Jim Nicholson – 5th U.S. Secretary of Veterans Affairs



David Shulkin, M.D. – 9<sup>th</sup> U.S. Secretary of Veterans Affairs



James B. Peake – 6<sup>th</sup> U.S. Secretary of Veterans Affairs



Robert Wilkie – 10<sup>th</sup> U.S. Secretary of Veterans Affairs



Eric Shinseki – 7<sup>th</sup> United States Secretary of Veterans Affairs