

**NINETY-SIXTH NATIONAL CONVENTION  
OF  
THE AMERICAN LEGION  
Charlotte, North Carolina  
August 26, 27, 28, 2014**

**Resolution No. 196: Suicide Prevention for American Veterans Act**

**Origin: New York**

**Submitted by: Convention Committee on Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation**

WHEREAS, Members of the United States Armed Forces are often called upon to perform their duties in stressful and life-threatening situations which can result in the development of mental health issues; and

WHEREAS, According to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) an estimated 22 veterans die each day by suicide; and

WHEREAS, The Suicide Prevention for American Veterans Act would improve access to care for veterans by extending the period during which veterans who experienced combat are eligible for care from 5 years to 15 years; and

WHEREAS, The act would increase the service capacity of the VA by offering student loan repayment to mental health care professional who agree to long-term service commitments; and

WHEREAS, Under the Act, the VA and the Department of Defense (DOD) would be required to review their mental health care programs annually to ensure their effectiveness, offer special training on identifying those veterans who are at risk of suicide to their mental health providers and to improve the process regarding medical records and prescriptions to ensure seamless care to transitioning servicemembers; and

WHEREAS, Enhancing mental health care services provided by the federal government would better the lives for countless returning servicemembers and veterans; now, therefore, be it

**RESOLVED, By The American Legion in National Convention assembled in Charlotte, North Carolina, August 26, 27, 28, 2014, That The American Legion urge the U.S. Congress to pass and the President to sign into law the Suicide Prevention for American Veterans Act or similar acts that will expand and improve the care provided to veterans and servicemembers who have mental health issues or are at risk for suicide.**