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## Commander John Scott Hannon Veterans Mental Health Care Improvement Act

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The Commander John Scott Hannon Veterans Mental Health Care Improvement Act (Hannon Act), broadens mental health care and suicide prevention programs that will effectively evaluate and treat mental health conditions for Veterans. The Hannon Act's 34 sections build upon VA's existing mental health services and will improve access options for Veterans. VA is committed to the men and women who have served our country and continues to advocate for better mental health and early intervention services. We proudly partner with federal and local agencies and private entities to achieve our shared goal of preventing Veteran suicide.

### Hannon Act Goals

- » To advance efforts by VA, other federal partners, and local communities in preventing suicide and promoting mental health and well-being among Veterans
- » To build upon VA's public health approach, combining community and clinically-based interventions to prevent Veteran suicides for those inside and outside VA

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## Improve Veterans' mental health care and services

- » Expand mental health care options for Veterans in underserved communities through grant programs. This includes the Staff Sergeant Parker Gordon Fox Suicide Prevention Grant Program, which dedicates resources toward community-based suicide prevention efforts for Veterans and their families.
- » Assess complementary and integrative health treatments to optimize VA's Whole Health model, giving Veterans more care options to take charge of their health.
- » Boost telehealth availability in rural areas to reduce barriers Veterans face in accessing mental health services.

## Advance mental health research

- » Studying causes of mental health disorders so it can identify, improve, and expand treatment protocols. VA will also use study results to enhance mental health and suicide prevention resources and care provisions.
- » Analyzing data from Veterans with severe mental illness to expand our knowledge and help identify those susceptible to disease, improving diagnostics and care for Veterans.



## Innovative programs under way

- » Establishing a scholarship program to build on professional education of VA's mental health providers, bringing new, innovative ideas in mental health and extending support services to Veterans in rural areas.
- » Conducting a pilot program to explore alternative mental health treatments for Veterans, including animal therapy, sports and recreation therapy, and art therapy.
- » Studying the impact of living at high altitude and risk of suicide and depression among Veterans to help clinicians identify and treat at-risk patients.

**For more information about Hannon Act and VA's mental health services, please visit:**

[congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/senate-bill/785](https://congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/senate-bill/785)

[mentalhealth.va.gov/SSGFox-Grants/](https://mentalhealth.va.gov/SSGFox-Grants/)

[mentalhealth.va.gov/suicide\\_prevention/](https://mentalhealth.va.gov/suicide_prevention/)



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