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Testimony before the Senate Veterans and Public Safety Committee
Senate Concurrent Resolution 9
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Chairman Johnson, Vice Chairman Wilson, Ranking Member Craig and members of the Senate Veterans and Public Safety Committee, thank you for allowing me to stand before you today and offer proponent testimony on Senate Concurrent Resolution 9.

I am David Root, a US Navy Veteran of the Vietnam War. I am a State Legislative Chairman for the Department of Ohio Veterans of Foreign Wars and a past State Commander.

Senator Schaffer's concurrent resolution has a whole bunch of 'Whereas' in it and they point out many disturbing statistics. Some of them are...

- The top two most common mental health problems faced by returning troops are depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).
- The stress of long-term deployments can increase the chance of having PTSD or other mental health problems.
- 30,177 active duty personnel and veterans have died by suicide since 9-11 compared to the 7,057 killed in action during the same 20 year period. The number killed by their own hand is more than four times greater than the number killed by the hand of their enemy.
- Suicide rates among active-duty military members in 2021 were at an all-time high.

The resolution also points out that VA medical centers all have specialists who provide treatment for veterans with PTSD, but not all veterans are receiving sufficient treatment.

The Veterans of Foreign Wars have been advocating high-quality mental health care for active duty and veterans during most of our 125-year history. The Ohio VFW is 100% supportive of SCR 8. Congress, the Veterans Administration, and the Department of Defense must do more to ensure the men and women of our Armed Services—past, current, and future—receive the care they deserve so they can successfully fight the demons eating away at them and pushing them to the point of suicide.

I urge this committee to favorably pass Senate Concurrent Resolution Number 8 as soon as possible.

Chairman Johnson and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to add my support to this important piece of legislation. I will try to answer any questions you might have.