Dear Speaker Pelosi and Leader McCarthy,

We write to request your immediate attention and passage of S.785, the Commander John Scott Hannon Veterans Mental Health Care Improvement Act. This bipartisan legislation, sponsored by fifty-four U.S. Senators was developed with and is supported by nearly forty veterans service organizations, mental health patient advocacy groups and entities who serve veterans in communities across the nation. Expressed support from these organizations is included in an addendum to this letter. S.785 received a unanimous 17-0 vote out of the U.S. Senate Committee on Veterans’ Affairs and was recently passed by unanimous consent in the U.S. Senate.

This legislation is named for Commander John Scott Hannon, a decorated Navy SEAL veteran from Montana who lost his life to the invisible wounds of war in 2018. Sadly he is not alone, as many as 20 veterans die by suicide each day, and recent research has shown that for every one death by suicide, over 115 people are directly affected and negatively impacted. Suicide is a national tragedy and these deaths are preventable if the right care, services and supports are available for our nation’s veterans at-risk of suicide. S.785 puts in place the critical care, services and supports that will save veterans’ lives.

Approximately 14 out of the 20 veterans who die by suicide each day are not in the VA system. This legislation makes investments in veteran-serving community organizations across the nation to reach vulnerable veterans not currently connected to VA care to provide wrap-around suicide prevention services with the VA. Additionally, the bill establishes increased accountability over the Department’s mental health and suicide prevention programs, expands VA telehealth capabilities to better serve rural veterans, bolsters and expedites federal research capabilities, directs VA to embark on a precision medicine initiative that will improve how mental health conditions are diagnosed and treated, and makes necessary improvements to the VA mental health workforce.

The social isolation and increased anxiety caused by the COVID-19 pandemic has only exacerbated many of the issues our veterans face. Our nation’s veterans and their families are waiting on Congress to take action to deliver these desperately needed resources. We must act now to provide this vital assistance to Americans who have sacrificed so much for our country and who deserve the best our nation has to offer. As such, we are seeking immediate passage of S. 785 when the U.S. House of Representatives reconvenes in September.
Thank you for your attention to this urgent request and for ensuring our veterans and their families have the critical care and support they need.

Sincerely,

Jerry Moran  
Chairman  

Jon Tester  
Ranking Member

CC: The Honorable Mark Takano, Chairman, House Committee on Veterans Affairs  
The Honorable Phil Roe, Ranking Member, House Committee on Veterans Affairs

Mike Crapo  
U.S. Senator

Cory A. Booker  
U.S. Senator

Dan Sullivan  
U.S. Senator

Michael F. Bennet  
U.S. Senator

Susan M. Collins  
U.S. Senator

Joe Manchin III  
U.S. Senator

M. Michael Rounds  
U.S. Senator

Jeanne Shaheen  
U.S. Senator
John Cornyn  
U.S. Senator

/s/ John Cornyn  
John Cornyn  
U.S. Senator

Kevin Cramer  
U.S. Senator

/s/ Kevin Cramer  
Kevin Cramer  
U.S. Senator

Jacky Rosen  
U.S. Senator

/s/ Jacky Rosen  
Jacky Rosen  
U.S. Senator

Mark R. Warner  
U.S. Senator

/s/ Mark R. Warner  
Mark R. Warner  
U.S. Senator

Kevin Cramer  
U.S. Senator

/s/ Kevin Cramer  
Kevin Cramer  
U.S. Senator

Robert P. Casey, Jr.  
U.S. Senator

/s/ Robert P. Casey, Jr.  
Robert P. Casey, Jr.  
U.S. Senator

Marsha Blackburn  
U.S. Senator

/s/ Marsha Blackburn  
Marsha Blackburn  
U.S. Senator

Robert P. Casey, Jr.  
U.S. Senator

/s/ Robert P. Casey, Jr.  
Robert P. Casey, Jr.  
U.S. Senator

Steve Daines  
U.S. Senator

/s/ Steve Daines  
Steve Daines  
U.S. Senator

Debbie Stabenow  
U.S. Senator

/s/ Debbie Stabenow  
Debbie Stabenow  
U.S. Senator

Ron Wyden  
U.S. Senator

/s/ Ron Wyden  
Ron Wyden  
U.S. Senator

John Boozman  
U.S. Senator

/s/ John Boozman  
John Boozman  
U.S. Senator

Roger F. Wicker  
U.S. Senator

/s/ Roger F. Wicker  
Roger F. Wicker  
U.S. Senator

Christopher A. Coons  
U.S. Senator

/s/ Christopher A. Coons  
Christopher A. Coons  
U.S. Senator

John Boozman  
U.S. Senator

/s/ John Boozman  
John Boozman  
U.S. Senator

Jack Reed  
U.S. Senator

/s/ Jack Reed  
Jack Reed  
U.S. Senator

Martha McSally  
U.S. Senator

/s/ Martha McSally  
Martha McSally  
U.S. Senator

Martha McSally  
U.S. Senator

/s/ Martha McSally  
Martha McSally  
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Jack Reed  
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/s/ Jack Reed  
Jack Reed  
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Cory Gardner
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Rob Portman
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Tim Kaine
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Margaret Wood Hassan
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Doug Jones
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Dianne Feinstein
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Kyrsten Sinema
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Amy Klobuchar
U.S. Senator

Tina Smith
U.S. Senator