



March 21, 2022

The Honorable Eduardo Garcia  
California State Assembly  
1021 O St., Ste. 8120  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Re: AB 2032 (E. Garcia) Ending Military and Veteran Suicide Task Force – SUPPORT**

Dear Assemblymember Garcia,

On behalf of the California State Association of Psychiatrists (CSAP), I write in support of your AB 2032, which would establish an Ending Military and Veteran Suicide Task Force within the Office of Suicide Prevention to systematically reduce military and veteran suicides.

Veteran mental health and suicide is an urgent issue that demands our attention. Many factors contribute to mental health problems, including trauma or abuse. Experiencing or witnessing a terrifying and traumatic event can often lead to recurring intrusive memories as well as changes in one's thinking, mood, and emotions. According to the RAND Center for Military Health Policy Research, 20 percent of veterans who served in either Iraq or Afghanistan suffer from either major depression or post-traumatic stress disorder. These mental disorders can often lead to suicide attempts.

In 2001, veterans accounted for 5,989 suicides, representing 20.2% of suicides among U.S. adults. By comparison, in 2019, veterans accounted for 6,261 suicides, representing 13.7% of suicides among U.S. adults. In the same 18-year span, the average number of Veteran suicides per day rose 4.5%, from 16.4 in 2001 to 17.2 in 2019.

Under AB 2032, the Ending Military and Veteran Suicide Task Force would develop a plan to eliminate all military and veteran suicides in the state. Commencing June 1, 2024, the bill would require the task force to submit a specified report to the Governor and the Legislature on the state of veteran suicide prevention, including, among other things, an analysis of the plans, activities, strategies, and programs undertaken pursuant to the task force's recommendations and their effects on reducing military and veteran suicides in the state.

For these reasons, CSAP is pleased to support AB 2032 and would like to thank you for your authorship of this measure.

Sincerely,



Paul Yoder  
Legislative Advocate

CC: Chair & Members, Assembly Health Committee  
Chair & Members, Assembly Public Safety Committee  
Chair & Members, Assembly Military and Veterans Committee