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Focus on Active Duty and Veteran Suicides

Senator Donnelly's Inquiries

- January 30: During the Secretary of Defense confirmation hearing, Senator Donnelly noted that the number of suicide deaths among military personnel had outpaced combat related deaths in Afghanistan. He asked Secretary Hagel about DoD prevention efforts.
- February 21: During the sequestration hearing, Senator Donnelly again identified the high number of suicide deaths. He inquired as to the impact of sequestration on DoD programs and asked the Joint Chiefs to protect these programs as much as possible.
- February 28: During the confirmation hearing for DoD civilian leadership, Senator Donnelly asked both Mr. Vollrath (ASD Readiness and Force Management) and Mr. Fanning (Under Secretary of the Air Force) about their suicide prevention efforts. He specifically asked them to protect the funding from sequestration cuts and to evaluate services provided to National Guard service members when they are not on active duty status.
- March 5: During the posture hearing for CENTCOM and SOCOM, Senator Donnelly thanked Adm. McRaven, Commander of SOCOM, for his support of his command's Preservation of the Force and Families Task Force, which provides extensive support for servicemembers and their families.

Active Duty Suicide Statistics

- 2012 had the highest rate of suicide since the Pentagon began closely tracking suicides in 2001. [military.com, 1/14/13]
- In 2012, more active duty servicemembers committed suicide (349) than were killed in combat in Afghanistan (229). [Washington Post, [1/14/13](#)]
- In 2012, 30 per every 100,000 military personnel commit suicide, outpacing civilian population who commit suicide at a rate of 24 per 100,000. [USA Today, [11/18/12](#)]

Veterans Suicide Statistics

- According the Department of Veterans Affairs, a veteran dies by suicide every 65 minutes. [Forbes, [2/05/13](#)]
- Approximately 950 veterans under VA care attempted suicide each month between October 2008 and December 2010. [Christian Science Monitor, [8/17/12](#)]
- More than 69 percent of veteran suicides were among individuals aged 50 years or older. [Reuters, 2/01/13]