

For Immediate Release



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AMVETS Pleased With Much Anticipated Release of PREVENTS Task Force Roadmap

WASHINGTON D.C., June 17, 2020 – AMVETS expressed optimism in efforts to curb veteran and family member suicide after President Trump presented The President’s Roadmap to Empower Veterans and End the National Tragedy of Suicide (PREVENTS) Roadmap at the White House today. The Roadmap is the culmination of a year-long collaboration with over 150 public and private stakeholders, including AMVETS leadership and HEAL Team.

Last year, President Trump issued an executive order in response to calls for more effective measures to reduce suicide among veterans. While the rate of suicide among veterans overall had plateaued, despite record budgets set aside for mental health and suicide prevention initiatives, women veterans died by suicide at an increased rate when compared to previous years. Following the release of the executive order, the White House Domestic Policy Council commissioned a cabinet-level task force to develop a national roadmap that includes a community integration and collaboration proposal, a national research strategy, and an implementation strategy.

“We’ve eagerly anticipated this Roadmap since the signing of this Executive Order and we finally have a detailed, thorough strategy to combat veteran suicide,” said AMVETS National Executive Director Joe Chenelly. “It’s taken months of collaboration from numerous organizations like AMVETS, it was momentarily delayed due to the pandemic, but now we’re looking at a blueprint to heal American Veterans. It’s time to begin implementing it.”

Details on the Roadmap will be available for review on the [PREVENTS website](#). It will also include Supplemental Materials and a companion document that provides additional information about specific elements of the Roadmap.

President Trump also announced the inaugural recognition of PREVENTS Week beginning July 6, which will feature a number of events focused on key areas of engagement with the public, local governments, corporations, organizations, and other stakeholders.

AMVETS Chief Advocacy Officer Sherman Gillums Jr. echoed Chenelly's enthusiasm and added, "I'm particularly pleased with the expanded focus on the family. For example, caregivers for disabled veterans and the children of service members bear their own hidden burdens and risks of suicide as they cope with a loved one who may be battling depression or post traumatic stress. It's past time for a whole-health approach to confronting veteran suicide where the responsibility is shared on a broader scale. This PREVENTS roadmap and collaborative approach spreads the responsibility so that we can finally close gaps through which too many veterans fall."

AMVETS, which is also known as American Veterans, is the most inclusive Congressionally-chartered veterans service organization open to representing the interests of 20 million veterans and their families. We are veterans serving veterans since 1944. amvets.org

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