

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2019

FILED SENATE
Apr 1, 2019
S.B. 458
PRINCIPAL CLERK

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SENATE BILL DRS35203-LG-105

Short Title: Establish Posttraumatic Stress Injury Day. (Public)

Sponsors: Senators Brown, J. Jackson, and Burgin (Primary Sponsors).

Referred to:

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
2 AN ACT DESIGNATING POSTTRAUMATIC STRESS INJURY AWARENESS DAY IN
3 NORTH CAROLINA.

4 Whereas, all citizens of the United States possess the basic human right to the
5 preservation of personal dignity; and

6 Whereas, all citizens of the United States deserve the investment of every possible
7 resource to ensure their lasting physical, mental, and emotional well-being; and

8 Whereas, the diagnosis known as posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) was initially
9 formulated in 1980 by the American Psychiatric Association to more accurately assess and assist
10 veterans who had endured severe combat stress in Vietnam; and

11 Whereas, combat stress is an invisible wound which has historically been unjustly
12 portrayed as a mental illness caused by a preexisting flaw of character or ability, and that the
13 word "disorder" carries a stigma which perpetuates this misconception; and

14 Whereas, it has been shown through electromagnetic imaging that these invisible
15 wounds can cause physical changes to the brain which more accurately describe an injury than a
16 disorder; and

17 Whereas, referring to invisible wounds as a disorder can discourage the injured from
18 seeking proper and timely medical treatment; and

19 Whereas, referring to invisible wounds as posttraumatic stress injury (PTSI) is less
20 stigmatizing and viewed as more honorable, and this designation can favorably influence those
21 affected and encourage them to seek treatment without fear of retribution or shame; and

22 Whereas, PTSI can occur following exposure to extremely traumatic events other than
23 combat such as interpersonal violence, life-threatening accidents, and natural disasters; and

24 Whereas, PTSI-satisfying criteria A through H of the diagnosis for PTSD in the
25 Diagnostic Statistical Manual deserves disability compensation equal to that allowed for PTSD
26 under the law; and

27 Whereas, timely and appropriate treatment of PTSI can diminish complications and
28 avert suicides; and

29 Whereas, all citizens suffering PTSIs deserve our compassion and consideration,
30 those brave men and women of the United States Armed Forces who have received these wounds
31 in operational action against an enemy of the United States further deserve our clear and obvious
32 recognition; Now, therefore,

33 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

34 **SECTION 1.** Chapter 103 of the General Statutes is amended by adding a new
35 section to read:

36 "**§ 103-15. Posttraumatic stress injury awareness.**



1 June 27 of each year is designated as Posttraumatic Stress Injury Awareness Day in North
2 Carolina."

3 **SECTION 2.** This act is effective when it becomes law.