



HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
VETERANS' AFFAIRS
Chairman Phil Roe, M.D.

H.R. 4173: The Veterans Crisis Line Study Act of 2017

Background:

According to a [2016 report on veteran suicide](#), 20 veterans take their lives every single day. Recent data released by the Department of Veterans Affairs highlighted that, after adjusting for differences in age and sex, risk for suicide is still 22 percent higher among veterans than nonveterans in the United States. In 2007, VA launched the Veterans Crisis Line (VCL) to connect veterans contemplating suicide or otherwise in crisis with qualified crisis responders. The VCL toll-free phone line is staffed 24 hours a day, seven days a week and includes an online chat option and a text messaging service.

In 2016, both the [VA Inspector General](#) and the [Government Accountability Office](#) (GAO) published reports that contained a number of findings and recommendations calling VCL's operations and quality into question. The committee examined these reports and a subsequent IG report issued at [an April 2017 hearing](#) on the Veterans Crisis Line.

H.R. 4173 would require VA to conduct a study on the outcomes and efficacy of the Veterans Crisis Line based on an analysis of national suicide data and data collected from the VCL.

The Message:

- It is our duty to take care of veterans suffering from the invisible wounds of war.
- We must ensure that the Veterans Crisis Line is functioning effectively to provide veterans in crisis with the resources they need.
- This draft bill would enable VA to study the outcomes and efficacy of the Veterans Crisis Line.