

2013 Session Bill #: SB762
Joint Committee on Pages: 7
Ways and Means Trans/Econ Dev Subcommittee
Date: 5/16/13 Exhibit #: 6

No one left behind.

<< Free 100% Anonymous Help 24/7/365. >>

A Unique Service for Military Personnel, Vets and their Families

The Military Helpline is a nationwide service of *Lines for Life*, a nonprofit that has been preventing alcohol and drug abuse, and suicide since 1993. Though we work in partnership with them, we are independent of any branch of the military or government. The result is *all conversations can remain completely anonymous*, and the service member, veteran or family members can talk with us without fear of repercussions.

The Military Helpline is staffed 24/7/365 by veterans and professional volunteers trained in military culture. We assist all active duty service members, veterans and their families with concerns including alcohol and drug abuse, domestic problems, financial difficulties, job challenges, emotional distress, Post Traumatic Stress, thoughts of suicide and other challenges.

It's an act of courage to ask for help when you need it.

You served courageously, now choose to get the help you deserve.



I had no idea what to do or where to go.

I was afraid to call my friends.

I am so glad I called and you answered.

Thank you for being there. ”



A Veteran
takes their life

EVERY
65
MINUTES

Department of Veterans Affairs

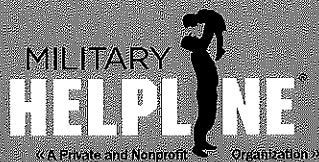
In 2012,
service members took
their own lives at a
rate of approximately

ONE EVERY
25
HOURS

U.S. Department of Defense

A SERVICE OF:
Lines for Life
Preventing substance abuse
and suicide

militaryhelpline.org | 888.457.4838 | 888.HLP.4.VET | 971.230.5555



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About the Military Helpline

>> 20 percent of suicides in the US are Veterans.
That's an average of 22 a day.

>> 2012 Active Duty Deaths

American Military combat deaths : **295**

American Military Suicides: **349**

STIGMA:

43%

of service members who took their own lives in 2010 did not seek help from military treatment facilities in the month before their deaths

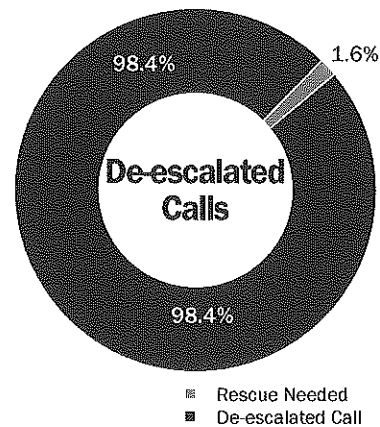
DOD Suicide Event Report

“That’s ingrained in you from the first day in the Army. To say ‘I’m hurt’ or ‘I need to see someone’ shows that you’re weak or that you are admitting weakness – and nobody wants to do that. As leaders we have to let people know that it’s OK to say ‘Please help me.’”

Sergeant First Class Mike Lavigne US Army

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Total Military-Related Calls from 2009 to 2012:
13,008



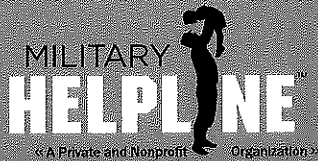
A rescue is performed when a caller cannot agree to a safety plan and emergency care professionals are asked to intercede.

“These combat related mental health challenges are normal, natural human responses to the violence of war. They are not in any way a sign of weakness and they should never be a source of shame or cause for stigma. But too often, they are misunderstood or misdiagnosed.”

First Lady Michelle Obama

Sources: Army National Guard | Department of Veterans Affairs | Department of Defense

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History of the Military Helpline

In 2009, the Oregon National Guard approached Oregon Partnership *Lines for Life* for assistance in creating a safety net for service members who are geographically dispersed. They described a deep need for “a friendly, open door not affiliated with the military” to help service members. Responding to this request, *Lines for Life* launched its Military Helpline in May 2010. The Military Helpline is staffed with veterans of the Iraq, Afghanistan and Vietnam wars. *Lines for Life* has also developed specialized training in suicide ideation as well as military culture for our civilian phone counselors, supervisors and families. We provide around-the-clock, real-time counseling and crisis intervention for veterans of all eras, current service members and their families.

Serving the region, *Lines for Life* reaches rural populations where suicide risk is high due to distance, isolation and lack of military support services. In addition, we serve military members, veterans and families in urban and suburban communities.

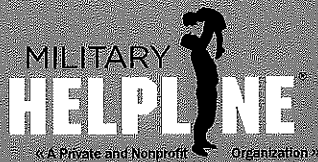
The *Lines for Life* staff is certified as “trainers of trainers” in suicide prevention, Post Traumatic Stress, mental health and addiction. We can offer valuable suicide prevention training to families, organizations and communities throughout the region.

“ This line is a critical resource for all of our military, veterans and their families. I strongly support Oregon Partnership (*Lines for Life*)’s efforts on behalf of our military and veterans. ”

Governor John A. Kitzhaber, MD

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Crisis counselors have answered calls from all 50 States, as well as internationally.

Each year we lose as many veterans to suicide in the United States as we have lost troops to combat over the last nine years, combined.

Dept. of Veterans Affairs, Fact Sheet: VHA Suicide Prevention Program, Facts About Veteran Suicide (March 2010)
6,440 U.S. service members have died in Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom through May 31, 2012

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How We've Helped

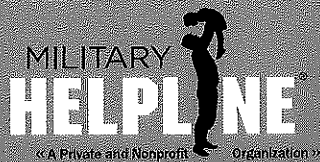
- A caller informed our crisis line counselor that he had a weapon and was planning on killing himself. The counselor, an Iraq War vet, developed a rapport with the caller and, by the end of the conversation the clip was out of the gun, the gun was locked up, and the caller had a safety plan in place. A follow up conversation confirmed his well being.
- A veteran contacted us and disclosed that he had decided to kill himself with pills that day. Over the course of two hours our team was able to get him to safety and into to a treatment center.
- A distraught military wife was guided to the resources that kept her electricity from being cut off.
- One caller reached the MHL requesting to speak only with a 'vet'. He had called several other military lines and was told there were no vets available to speak with him. He served in the 1980's with the duty of body retrieval. Thirty years later he called in the middle of a full blown PTS flashback. We were able to create a safe opportunity for him to talk and have a follow up call scheduled.

Lines for Life / Military Helpline crisis counselors, many of whom are veterans, are fully trained to actively address and prevent alcohol and drug abuse, and suicide. In addition to our anonymous telephone line, we also offer a secure chat interface and "SAT" line service for those overseas.

“... there's no shame in asking for help.”

James Gandolfini, Actor, Veteran Advocate

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About Our Organization

For twenty years, Oregon Partnership/*Lines for Life* has been preventing substance abuse and suicide. We do that in three specific areas:

Crisis Lines

Lines for Life's highly trained staff and volunteers respond to nearly 40,000 calls a year on our 24-hour crisis lines:

- **HelpLine:** Drug and alcohol referral and general crisis line for adults
800-923-HELP (4357)
- **Suicide Line:** Each month *Lines for Life* responds to approximately 1500 callers who are considering suicide or are suicidal at the time of their call.
800-273-TALK (8255) or 800-SUICIDE (784-2433)
- **YouthLine:** Crisis line staffed by and for teenagers **877-YOUTH-911 (968-8491)**
- **Military Helpline:** Resource for military service members, veterans and their families **888-HLP-4-VET (888-457-4838)**
- **Portland Suicide Lifeline:** In partnership with the City of Portland **503- 972-3456**

Youth and Parents

- We work with community groups statewide to address alcohol and drug problems through training and support.
- *Lines for Life* engages schools, educators, law enforcement, treatment providers and families to provide drug prevention programs and referral services. **YouthLink** educates students to advocate healthy decisions. **Parents Teaching Prevention** trains parents to discuss drug issues with their children.
- *Lines for Life* raises statewide public awareness on underage drinking, irresponsible alcohol products, drug trends and parental action.
- **CARSA** – (Community Action to Reduce Substance Abuse): *Lines for Life* leads Portland's coalition of law enforcement officials, business leaders, and elected officials to fight substance abuse.

Public Policy Advocacy

Lines for Life works with national and state lawmakers on legislation: is recognized as a leader in fighting prescription drug abuse and has helped shape national policy on substance abuse and suicide. Our advocacy efforts directly influenced the banning of synthetic marijuana and aided in a 96% decrease in meth labs in the state.

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*Preventing substance abuse
and suicide*

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OREGON MILITARY DEPARTMENT
JOINT FORCE HEADQUARTERS, OREGON NATIONAL GUARD
DEPUTY DIRECTOR STATE AFFAIRS
1776 MILITIA WAY SE
P.O. BOX 14350
SALEM, OREGON 97309-5047

May 23, 2011

To Whom it May Concern:

This letter is in support and endorsement of Oregon Partnership's Military Helpline.

I am familiar with the work done by Oregon Partnership, and particularly with its Military HelpLine which was launched in May of 2010 at the request of the Oregon National Guard. The HelpLine takes calls from returned military, active military and their families, on a variety of topics including substance abuse, suicide, pre- and post-deployment stress, and other issues. The calls are often taken by a military veteran who is a trained counselor, plus a cadre of volunteers who have all gone through 56 hours of training before taking any calls.

The HelpLine is available 24/7, and is free, confidential, and not connected with the VA. This latter point is important, as there often is a reluctance among active military and veterans to talk directly with the VA about these issues. Callers are connected with a live, trained person—often a military veteran—at any time, day or night. After listening to the call, the OP staff or volunteer will refer them to a place where they can get help for their issue.

Although OP started by primarily taking calls from Oregon, they have expanded to other states, and have submitted a proposal to the Department of the Army for funding to make the line national. Even with limited publicity, calls come in from all over the country, and in a few cases, overseas.

Oregon Partnership's Military HelpLine is one of only two in the country that are completely private, free and confidential. I cannot think of a better way to honor our veterans and their families than integrating Oregon Partnership's Military Helpline components with your current systems to enhance this valuable service. I strongly support their work and urge you to support this effort in any fashion that you can.

Sincerely,


J. Michael Caldwell
Brigadier General
Deputy Director

HOME FROM
THE FRONT?
WE'VE GOT YOUR BACK.

Getting back to daily life after you've been deployed can be difficult, no matter how much you've trained for it. The Military Helpline will assist you with anonymous, confidential crisis intervention and sensitivity to military-specific issues.

« FREE. 100% ANONYMOUS. 24/7. 365. »

MILITARY
HELPLINE
« A Private and Nonprofit Organization »



No one left behind.

888•457•4838

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