

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
SESSION 2019

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SENATE BILL 458

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

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

Referred to: Rules and Operations of the Senate

April 2, 2019

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT DESIGNATING POSTTRAUMATIC STRESS INJURY AWARENESS DAY IN  
NORTH CAROLINA.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

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

**"§ 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.