

# ARKANSAS GENERAL ASSEMBLY



**Senator Ron Caldwell, Chair**  
**Senator Trent Garner, Vice Chair**

**Representative Charlene Fite, Chair**  
**Representative Sonia Eubanks Barker, Vice Chair**

## **HOUSE INTERIM COMMITTEE ON AGING, CHILDREN AND YOUTH, AND LEGISLATIVE AND MILITARY AFFAIRS**

## **SENATE INTERIM COMMITTEE ON STATE AGENCIES AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS**

November 30, 2020

The Honorable Cecile Bledsoe, Co-Chair  
The Honorable Jeff Wardlaw, Co-Chair  
Arkansas Legislative Council  
320 State Capitol  
Little Rock, AR 72210

Dear Senator Bledsoe and Representative Wardlaw:

As Chairs of the Arkansas Senate Committee on State Agencies and Legislative Affairs and the Arkansas House Committee on Aging, Children and Youth, and Legislative and Military Affairs, in compliance with Act 551 of the 2019 General Assembly, we wish to inform you that our committees met on the following dates, and heard reports and discussion from the agencies and individuals below:

August 12, 2019, in Little Rock

- Veteran Suicide Update, Arkansas Veterans Coalition
- VA National Suicide Data Report, Central Arkansas Veterans Health System, Department of Psychiatry

October 28, 2019, in El Dorado

- Representatives from the Congressional Offices of Senator John Boozman, Senator Tom Cotton, and Representative Bruce Westerman
- Suicide Prevention Program, Department of Health, Injury and Violence Prevention
- Veterans Services Available, Statewide and District 9
- National Strategies for the Prevention of Veteran Suicide, Central Arkansas Veterans Health System, Department of Psychiatry

December 19, 2019, in Cabot

- "We Ae the 22" Veterans Suicide Outreach and Prevention Program
- National Guard Bureau Survivor Outreach Services
- National Alliance of Mental Illness, Arkansas Division
- Veterans Villages of America Services for Homeless Veterans
- Individuals Sharing Personal Testimony

February 24, 2020, in Van Buren

- Veterans Upward Bound Program, Henderson State University
- K9 Service Dog Programs
- The Ozark Mountain Veterans Reboot Combat Recovery Program
- Individuals Sharing Personal Testimony

August 31, 2020, in Little Rock

- Incorporating Measurements and Providing Resources for Outreach to Veterans Everyone (IMPROVE) Wellbeing for Veterans Act Presentation
- Central Arkansas Veterans Healthcare System Suicide Prevention Programs

November 13, 2020, in Little Rock

- Veterans Services Available through the Arkansas Department of Veterans Affairs
- Federal CARES Act, Grant Programs for Veterans

The Committees propose the following recommendations:

- Develop a grant system and increase funding for non-profits that directly assist veterans;
- Increase staffing for the Department of Health Injury and Violence/Suicide Prevention Program and the Suicide Prevention Hotline; and
- Create a Veterans' Advocacy Board.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions concerning this report.

Respectfully submitted,

*Trent Garner / ap*

Senator Trent Garner, Vice Chair  
Senate Committee on State Agencies &  
Governmental Affairs

*Charlene Fite / ap*

Representative Charlene Fite, Chair  
House Committee on Aging, Children and  
Youth, and Legislative and Military  
Affairs