

**RESOLUTION BY DEMOCRATS ABROAD
CALLING ON THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
TO ESTABLISH A FREE AND EFFECTIVE
SUICIDE PREVENTION CRISIS HOTLINE
FOR U.S. VETERANS LIVING ABROAD**

WHEREAS Democrats Abroad honors the men and women of our armed forces and believes strongly that their service deserves our deepest gratitude and respect;

WHEREAS we advocate for expanding access to healthcare and other services provided by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs to veterans who live abroad;

WHEREAS an increasing number of young veterans are now using the Post-9/11 GI Bill to study abroad;

WHEREAS historically the suicide rate among the military has been only about half that of civilian society, but since 2009 has risen above that rate and remained there, and according to the latest studies is as high as twenty a day;

WHEREAS The veterans' vulnerability to suicide is often related to injury and trauma they experienced while serving on active duty,

WHEREAS veterans living abroad cannot easily avail themselves of military facilities where emergency care may be available to actively serving soldiers

WHEREAS veterans able to obtain VA care and attention are less likely to do harm to themselves or others;

WHEREAS we believe that every veteran suicide is one too many, and that suicide prevention is everyone's responsibility;

WHEREAS all U.S. veterans, at home and abroad, should have equal access to immediate psychological counseling in a time of crisis;

WHEREAS access from abroad to the VA crisis hotline, SMS text and chat via the website is currently too costly, cumbersome and slow to prevent suicide; and

NOW, BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that Democrats Abroad hereby calls upon the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs to establish an effective and free suicide prevention hotline for U.S. Veterans living abroad; and calls upon Congress to provide adequate funding to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs to maintain such suicide prevention hotline.