

FEB 12 2014

SENATE RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES TO CREATE A TASK FORCE TO STUDY THE POSSIBLE BENEFITS OF HYPERBARIC TREATMENT FOR VETERANS WHO SUFFER FROM POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER AND TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY.

1 WHEREAS, it is estimated that between eleven per cent and
2 twenty per cent of Iraq and Afghanistan war veterans experience
3 post-traumatic stress disorder; and
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5 WHEREAS, according to data from the Armed Forces Health
6 Surveillance Center, in 2013 alone, over twenty thousand
7 military members worldwide have experienced some kind of brain
8 injury; and
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10 WHEREAS, while not all of these injuries were deployment-
11 related, many are due to the dangerous conditions confronting
12 service members, such as land mines, improvised explosive
13 devices, and grenades; and
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15 WHEREAS, hyperbaric oxygen therapy involves breathing pure
16 oxygen in a pressurized room which increases oxygen delivery to
17 the tissues, with the benefit of enhancing white blood cell
18 activity, stimulating the formation of new blood vessels, and
19 allowing the body to naturally heal itself; and
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21 WHEREAS, hyperbaric oxygen therapy has been found to
22 significantly enhance the brain's energy production and minimize
23 the intracranial pressure on the brain without any toxic effects
24 on the brain or the lungs; and
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26 WHEREAS, case studies have consistently shown hyperbaric
27 oxygen therapy to not only repair parts of the brain that may
28 have been dormant but also to revitalize parts of the brain that
29 had not properly been functioning; and
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31 WHEREAS, the United States Department of Defense and the
32 United States Department of Veterans Affairs have substantially
33 invested in the research and exploration of complementary and
34 alternative medicine, spending nearly \$65,000,000 on research



1 projects around the country focusing on whether current medical
2 practices combined with alternative medicine techniques can help
3 troops with injuries they sustained during war; and
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5 WHEREAS, the United States Department of Veteran Affairs
6 has established specialized mental health centers of excellence
7 to address the mental health needs of veterans returning from
8 war, which has allowed researchers and clinicians to explore
9 alternative treatments to mental health disorders; and
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11 WHEREAS, the White House has expressed strong support for
12 hyperbaric oxygen treatment as part of the White House Joining
13 Forces initiative, which supports returning veterans by
14 reconnecting them to the resources they need; and
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16 WHEREAS, the University of Hawaii John A. Burns School of
17 Medicine has joined the White House Joining Forces initiative by
18 adjusting their curricula to refocus its research and clinical
19 trials involving post-traumatic stress disorder and traumatic
20 brain injury to better serve veterans; now, therefore,
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22 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Twenty-seventh
23 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2014,
24 that the Department of Human Services is requested to create a
25 task force that includes representatives of health care
26 professionals, the armed forces, and veterans groups, to study
27 the possible benefits of hyperbaric treatment for veterans
28 suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder and traumatic
29 brain injury; and
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31 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force, in considering
32 the feasibility of hyperbaric treatment as a treatment for
33 veterans suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder and
34 traumatic brain injury, is requested to take into account any
35 waivers or subsidies available from Medicare and Medicaid to
36 facilitate hyperbaric oxygen treatment for veterans in need of
37 treatment; and
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39 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Human
40 Services is requested to report to the Legislature, no later
41 than twenty days prior to the convening of the Regular Session
42 of 2015, on any findings and recommendations concerning the
43 possible benefits and implementation of hyperbaric oxygen



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1 treatment for veterans who suffer from post-traumatic stress
2 disorder and traumatic brain injury; and
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4 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
5 Resolution be transmitted to the Director of Human Services, the
6 Director of Health, the Executive Director of the Office of
7 Veterans Services, and the Dean of the University of Hawaii John
8 A. Burns School of Medicine.
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OFFERED BY: 

