

House Dems Pass Legislation for Veterans' Mental Health

Bipartisan bill package increases support for current, former service members



Reps. Conlin, Brabec and Morse on House Floor.

State Reps. Jennifer Conlin (D-Ann Arbor Charter Township), Felicia Brabec (D-Pittsfield Township) and Christine Morse (D-Texas Township) on the House Floor on Thursday, June 20, 2024, at the State Capitol in Lansing.

LANSING, Mich., June 20, 2024 — Today, a bipartisan bill package aimed at providing mental health and substance abuse resources for service members, veterans and their families passed the House. [House Bill 5276](#) will statutorily establish an Office of Mental Health and Suicide Prevention within the Michigan Veterans Affairs Agency.

“I commend the bipartisan effort that led to the passage of this crucial bill package today. Ensuring our vets and their family members have access to essential mental health and substance abuse resources is a vital commitment,” said **state Rep. Jennifer Conlin** (D-Ann Arbor Charter Township), chair of the House Committee on Military, Veterans and Homeland Security. “This legislation marks a significant step toward supporting those who have sacrificed so much for our country. It's a privilege to support initiatives that prioritize veterans' well-being by ensuring they receive the care and assistance they deserve.”

State Rep. Christine Morse (D-Texas Township) is the sponsor of [HB 5277](#), which lays the foundation for interagency collaboration and veteran outreach that the new office will conduct.

“As the spouse of a Navy veteran, I know that the transition from active duty to civilian life can be challenging, especially for those who served in combat,” **Morse** said. “These bills will ensure resources are available to make the transition easier and provide increased access to mental health services, with the hope of reducing the epidemic of veteran suicide.”

[HB 5279](#), sponsored by **state Rep. Felicia Brabec** (D-Pittsfield Township), outlines a peer-to-peer program that the Michigan Veterans Affairs Agency will implement to support veterans and Michiganders currently serving in the military.

“As the only clinical psychologist in the state Legislature, I know firsthand how vital it is for every Michigander to have access to the mental health care, treatment and support they need,” **Brabec** said. “Our veterans and active military members have sacrificed so much for us, and I’m thrilled to sponsor legislation that will give our veterans the support they deserve.”

###