

Conlin's Committee Hears Testimony on Veterans' Mental Health Package

LANSING, Mich., May 14, 2024 — Today, the House Military, Veterans and Homeland Security Committee heard testimony on a Mental Health Package, [House Bills 5276-80](#) and [House Bill 5720](#), establishing the Office of Mental Health and Suicide Prevention within the Michigan Veterans Affairs Agency. This comprehensive legislative effort reflects a commitment to providing essential support to Michigan's service members and veterans, addressing critical issues such as mental health and suicide prevention.

"This legislative victory marks a significant step forward in bolstering mental health resources and suicide prevention initiatives for our military servicemembers and veterans," said **state Rep. Jennifer Conlin** (D-Ann Arbor), chair of the committee. "With this legislation, we are sending a clear message: Michigan stands ready to honor and support the brave men and women who have sacrificed for our freedoms."



State Rep. Jennifer Conlin (D-Ann Arbor) testifies in support of her bill package to improve mental health and reduce suicide among veterans on Tuesday, May 14, 2024, in the House Office Building in Lansing.

The package of bills is led by Conlin's HB 5276, which would establish a specialized office within the Michigan Veterans Affairs Agency, equipped with the necessary leadership, resources and data collection mechanisms to address the evolving needs of our veterans effectively.

Companion bills requiring interagency collaboration, creating mental health resource guides, implementing buddy-to-buddy mental health programs, and establishing transition programs for service members complement this effort comprehensively.

“With this bill package, we’re affirming our dedication to those who have served our nation,” **Conlin** said. “It’s so important that we provide avenues for support and assistance, and that we dismantle the stigma surrounding mental health in the military and veteran communities. We’re going to make it known that in Michigan, we’re here for our military families and veterans.”

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