



March 22, 2017

The Honorable Lee Zeldin
United States House of Representatives
1517 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

On behalf of the Association of the United States Navy, we would like to pledge our support for H.R. 897, a bill to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to make grants to State and local entities to carry out peer-to-peer mental health programs.

This bill allows for the Secretary of the VA to establish a grant program, named the P.F.C. Joseph P. Dwyer Peer Support Program, where the Secretary will make grants to eligible entities for the purpose of establishing peer-to-peer mental health programs for veterans. Such eligible entities include a nonprofit organization having historically served veterans' mental health needs, a congressionally chartered veteran service organization, or a state, local, or tribal veteran service agency, director, or commissioner.

The grant allocated in the bill cannot exceed \$250,000. The recipient of a grant will use the funds to hire veterans to serve as peer specialists to host group and individual meetings with veterans seeking nonclinical support and provide mental health support to veterans 24 hours a day.

Thank you for taking an active role in such an important issue to the Military and Veteran community by working to improve the lives and careers of those who served our great nation. Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns at 703-548-5800 or at michael.little@ausn.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Michael Joseph Little". To the right of the signature, there is a typed name "Michael J. Little" and the text "ABH² (Adm/Sec) USNR" in a smaller font.

Michael J. Little
Director of Legislative Affairs