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TREATNOW TALKING POINTS
Testimony on SB0709, SEN Elfreth
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PROBLEM:

- Our country's veterans are in a health crisis: the veteran suicide rate is increasing. More veterans and service members are suffering from traumatic brain injuries (TBI) and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). The VA/DoD calls it a suicide epidemic.
- Even though our government is spending billions of dollars on care for TBI and PTSD, it is not stopping the wave of suicides and opioid overdoses, which have continued to increase for more than 15 years. Service member suicides and prescribed drug overdoses total over 200,000 victims since 2003.
- The current standard of care for TBI and PTSD includes prescription drugs that warn of suicidal ideation and talk and cognitive therapy, which only manage symptoms and do not address *brain wound healing*. Continuing to NOT treat brain wounds will cost taxpayers **\$4.7 trillion** over forty years.
- Veterans are not even told that safe, effective, drug-free and non-invasive treatments exist. They are denied INFORMED CONSENT but given drugs that warn of suicidal ideation.
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SOLUTION:

- Expanding military and VA health care coverage to encompass non-traditional treatment options such as Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy (HBOT) will save taxpayers \$100 billion a year.
- The therapy manipulates oxygen pressure levels for patients over the course of several treatments, ranging from weeks to several months, and is not covered under military health care plans.
- Worldwide clinical studies prove the safety and efficacy of HBOT used to treat TBI and PTSD. The FDA already approves HBOT for fourteen indications, four of which are very similar to brain wounds.

ACTION:

- Eight other states have already enacted legislation calling for the use of HBOT for TBI and PTSD: OK, TX, IN, KY, AZ, FL, NC, WY. Four have allocated up to one million dollars to treat their veterans suffering brain wounds. AZ is contemplating a \$3.6M commitment. Other states in the drafting process include CO, MI, OH, and VA.
- At the national level, Bills are being considered and hold the VA accountable to provide Informed Consent and DO NO HARM. Medical Ethics demand that the US government provide ALL the care that is available.