Congressman Andy Biggs and Senator Kevin Cramer Introduce the TBI and PTSD Treatment Act

September 18, 2019

Press Release

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** – Today, Congressman Andy Biggs (AZ-05) and Senator Kevin Cramer (R-ND) introduced the *TBI and PTSD Treatment Act* to direct the Veterans Administration (VA) to furnish Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy (HBOT) to veterans with traumatic brain injury (TBI) and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).  TreatNOW and Healing Arizona Veterans, two organizations dedicated to the advancement of HBOT to treat TBI and PTSD, wrote in support of the *TBI and PTSD Treatment Act*.  Congressman Biggs and Senator Cramer released the following statements:

*“The TBI and PTSD Treatment Act gives veterans the freedom to use their hard-earned health care benefits for HBOT to treat TBI and PTSD. This bill gives veterans an additional choice to treat these serious mental health issues. More importantly, it removes the VA’s bureaucracy from medical decisions made between the veteran and his or her doctor. Unfortunately, we are still falling short in finding a solution to the suicide epidemic in our veteran’s community. HBOT has the potential to help the VA make progress in their mental health and suicide prevention efforts. This is an avenue where we have a lot of ground to gain. Therefore, it is imperative for our colleagues and the VA to join us in making this treatment available to our veterans as soon as possible. Time is of the essence.” –* **Congressman Andy Biggs** **(AZ-05)**

*“HBOT is an alternative, non-invasive, and effective therapeutic for those who served our nation in the most trying of times. This bill continues the momentum we started when the VA recently partnered with Healing with Hyperbarics of North Dakota in a Clinical Demonstration Program for veterans with PTSD. Our legislation builds upon that demonstration program by codifying HBOT as a covered treatment within the VA and expands access to veterans with TBI as well. I look forward to continuing to work with the Administration and my Congressional colleagues on getting more access to Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy for our veterans.” –* **Senator Kevin Cramer (R-ND)**

*“The TreatNOW Coalition has spent over a decade treating and helping heal brain wounds in veterans, service members, athletes, first responders, National Guard and Reserve, and citizens. We have over 6,100 successes in our 93 Coalition clinics network. We have successfully helped treat and heal over 2,400 veterans and dozens of active duty Special Operations warriors.*

*"The VA’s current Pilot Demonstration project using HBOT for PTSD patients has recently expanded to five sites. All patients treated thus far have shown significant medical improvement, further validating the safety and efficacy of HBOT for brain impairment.” –* **Robert L. Beckman, PhD, TreatNOW**

*“Arizona was the fifth State to join this grassroots effort to enact legislation in support of this treatment in a unique Private-Public partnership. Through private donations, the two private facilities in our network have treated over 60 veterans suffering from TBI and PTSD in the past 18 years. We are currently treating two veterans and have requests for a further seven. All Board members and senior staff members at HAV are volunteers. If this legislation is approved and the VA funds the treatment, we will be able to treat up to 300 veterans a year. Based on our analysis, there are over 13,000 veterans in Arizona suffering from TBI.*

*“As Chairman of the Board of Healing Arizona Veterans, a Vietnam veteran, a military field surgeon in Afghanistan and Iraq, and a recipient of HBOT, this cause is close to my heart.”* – **Dr.** **Robert Sexton, M.D., Healing Arizona Veterans**

Fargo National Guardsman [Rusty Ouart](https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=https-3A__www.grandforksherald.com_news_2120012-2Dfargo-2Dguardsman-2Dtries-2Dnew-2Dtherapy&d=DwMGaQ&c=L93KkjKsAC98uTvC4KvQDdTDRzAeWDDRmG6S3YXllH0&r=91rFWzeJ6Ux_Zfd77j9-ogSKupuGPht0wGTeRuEBH9k&m=t-xfP2EQ-XM54oML0B1MyzlYlk2nld6wfoMBO2ZHYUc&s=PiYQSetSGsAgp9CERTcfP5PlJFeJRIlikJtCOdMJnO8&e=) joined TreatNOW and Healing Arizona Veterans- organizations dedicated to the advancement of HBOT to treat TBI and PTSD- to offer support for this legislation.

*“As a traumatic brain injured veteran, I received Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy that has given me the quality of life back to enjoy time with family. I suffered for 1 and 1/2 years before I received HBOT,”* **said Ouart, a Purple Heart Recipient and member of Senator Cramer Veterans Advisory Board.** *“My symptoms of migraines, that kept me in a dark room, vertigo causing nausea three times daily, speech deficit that I could not talk to my own children, using a cane for balance and issues lifting my right leg all were helped tremendously. I have the blood flow back in my brain. The SPECT scan imaging of my brain showed that half my brain was not getting blood supply and the MRIs were all read as normal.  After HBOT, I have color in my world and I feel like I have my life back!”*

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