

**From:** [Arellano, Joey](#)  
**To:** [Press](#)  
**Subject:** FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Representative Willhite Urges President Biden and Congress to Focus on Veteran Suicide Prevention  
**Date:** Friday, June 18, 2021 2:29:41 PM

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June 18, 2021

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## **Representative Willhite Urges President Biden and Congress to Focus on Veteran Suicide Prevention**

**WELLINGTON, Fla. – Representative Willhite (D-Wellington)** has sent a letter to **President Joe Biden** asking the President and the United States Congress to recognize the epidemic of suicide among veterans and to fully fund suicide prevention efforts by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs.

In the letter, **Representative Willhite** notes that his service in the United States Navy taught him the importance of placing community above self, and how these lessons have guided his time as an elected state representative. He also references a report released by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs in 2020. The letter references the over 6,000 veterans that have committed suicide after returning to the United States and how these numbers do not yet reflect the mental distress veterans may have suffered during the COVID-19 pandemic.

During the 2020 Legislative Session, **Representative Willhite** sponsored [HM 71](#) – a House Memorial recognizing the epidemic of suicide among veterans. The Florida House of Representatives overwhelmingly supported this memorial. Yet, due to time constraints, the recognition died in the Senate Appropriations Committee.

“Even though you will not be receiving a formal copy of this House Memorial, this issue is too important to me not to do everything in my ability to share it with you.” **Representative Willhite** continues, “I urge you to take the letter’s contents to heart and work with your colleagues in the United States Congress to fully fund the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs’ suicide prevention efforts. As President of the United States, your attention to this issue cannot be underestimated.”

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