

(West Windsor, NJ) – U.S. Rep. Rush Holt (NJ-12) today released the following statement regarding Gov. Chris Christie’s signing of S-1731, a New Jersey law that authorizes annual funding for the Veteran to Veteran Peer Support Program (Vet2Vet) telephone hotline:

“Too many soldiers returning from combat feel that they have no one to turn to who can understand their trauma, their stress, and their loneliness. For these men and women, Vet2Vet is a lifeline — something I’ve seen firsthand at their call center in Piscataway. I am encouraged that the governor and the legislature have acted to authorize state support for this important program. Now, lawmakers must actually provide funds to Vet2Vet in the years ahead.

“Although New Jersey’s support for Vet2Vet is critical, the tragedy of military suicide is too large to be addressed by any one state. Over the last two years, more U.S. soldiers have died by suicide than in combat. Congress should treat military suicide as what it is: one of the gravest threats facing our service members and veterans.

“In order to prevent military suicides nationwide, the U.S. House of Representatives has passed my legislation to dedicate \$20 million next year to programs like Vet2Vet. I hope that the U.S. Senate will pass these funds into law as quickly as possible.”

Further information about Rep. Holt’s legislation to support veteran-to-veteran peer support counseling is online at [http://holt.house.gov/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=909&Itemid=18](http://holt.house.gov/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=909&Itemid=18).

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