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The RAND Corporation

# GUIDE

A Resource for Lawmakers



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# About RAND

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The RAND Corporation is a nonprofit institution that helps improve policy and decisionmaking through research and analysis. RAND focuses on the issues that matter most, such as health, education, national security, international affairs, law and business, the environment, and more. With a research staff consisting of some of the world's preeminent minds, RAND has been expanding the boundaries of human knowledge for more than 60 years.

As a nonpartisan organization, RAND is widely respected for operating independent of political and commercial pressures.



## **ORIGIN OF OUR NAME**

RAND is a contraction of the term *research and development*. We are organized as a nonprofit corporation dedicated to furthering and promoting scientific, educational, and charitable purposes for the public welfare and security of the United States.

## **ORGANIZATION**

Research is carried out by five units that address social and economic policy issues; by three federally funded research and development centers (FFRDCs) that focus on national security; by professors and graduate students at the Pardee RAND Graduate School; and by RAND Europe, an independently chartered European affiliate.

## **FUNDING**

RAND research is commissioned by a global clientele that includes government agencies, foundations, and private-sector firms. U.S. federal, state, and local government agencies provide the largest share of funding. Additionally, RAND's Investment in People and Ideas program funds innovative research on issues crucial to the policy debate but that lie beyond the boundaries of traditional client funding. The program is supported by philanthropic contributions combined with earnings from RAND's endowment and operations.

## **LOCATIONS**

RAND is a global organization with offices around the world. RAND's three principal North American locations are Santa Monica, California, the home of our headquarters campus since 1948; Arlington, Virginia; and Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. The RAND Gulf States Policy Institute has offices in New Orleans, Louisiana, and Jackson, Mississippi. RAND Europe is located in Cambridge, UK, and Brussels, Belgium. The RAND-Qatar Policy Institute is in Doha, Qatar. RAND's newest locations include an office in Boston, Massachusetts, and a representative office in Mexico City, Mexico.

## PEOPLE

Approximately 1,600 people from more than 50 countries work at RAND. Project teams are assembled from among RAND's 950 research professionals whose collective expertise spans nearly every academic field and profession—from economics and behavioral science to medicine and engineering. With backgrounds in academia, government, and industry, RAND researchers combine theory with real-world experience.

## GOVERNANCE

Since 1948, RAND has operated as an independent, nonprofit organization. RAND's Board of Trustees includes distinguished public servants and leaders in the academic, business, and nonprofit sectors. Paul Kaminski, a technology company executive and former Pentagon official, serves as chairman of the board. James A. Thomson serves as president and chief executive officer. Michael D. Rich serves as executive vice president.

## EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Since 1970, RAND has operated an innovative and respected graduate school specializing in public policy analysis. The Pardee RAND Graduate School (PRGS) is the world's leading producer of Ph.D.'s in public policy analysis. PRGS currently enrolls approximately 90 Ph.D. students from more than 20 countries around the world. PRGS alumni can be found in government, business, nonprofit organizations, and academia. RAND also offers a number of internship and fellowship programs.

## HOW RAND IS DIFFERENT

Many nonprofit research organizations are known as think tanks, but RAND is the only organization that is independent and objective; rigorous and empirical; *and* simultaneously broad in scope, multidisciplinary in approach, and international in reach.

Unlike many for-profit consulting firms, our revenues support new research and we seek philanthropic support from individuals and organizations to coinvest in research on policy topics that are too large, too controversial, or too new for traditional client sponsorship.



## What Legislative Issues Does RAND Examine?

RAND keeps policymakers ahead of the curve on the issues that matter most. The following is a list of areas where RAND research or researchers can help you or your office:

- Aging, Retirement, and Social Security
- Banking and Financial Services
- Child Policy
- Education and the Arts
- Energy and Environment
- Gulf States Rebuilding and Recovery
- Health
- Homeland Security
- International Affairs
- Judiciary
- Labor, Population, and Demographics
- Military and Civil Service Personnel
- National Security
- Public Safety
- Small Business
- Terrorism
- Transportation and Housing
- Veterans

# RAND Resources for Lawmakers

- ▶ Briefings
- ▶ Meetings
- ▶ Testimony
- ▶ Research Briefs and  
Publications Highlights
- ▶ Newsletters
- ▶ Email Alerts
- ▶ Online and Multimedia Resources

RAND is dedicated to bringing our research to lawmakers who can use our high-quality, objective analysis to shape public policy and improve outcomes. We offer lawmakers and their staff a variety of opportunities to learn about RAND's findings and utilize our expertise.

## **BRIEFINGS**

Each month on Capitol Hill, the RAND Congressional Briefing Series offers a new presentation featuring RAND findings and recommendations on matters relevant to the current policy debate. RAND researchers are also available for briefings for committees or individual offices.

▶ *See page 9.*

## **MEETINGS**

Based on their expertise and research, RAND researchers can offer ideas and feedback about legislation. We can arrange meetings with RAND researchers for members or staff from committees, caucuses, and individual offices.

▶ *See page 11.*

## **TESTIMONY**

RAND researchers are available to give testimony before federal, state, and local legislative committees; government-appointed commissions and panels; and private review and oversight bodies.

▶ *See page 12.*

## **RESEARCH BRIEFS**

RAND reports can be hundreds of pages long. To make the main findings more accessible, RAND publishes short research briefs—policy-oriented summaries of individual published, peer-reviewed documents or of a body of published work.

▶ *See page 13.*

## **PUBLICATIONS HIGHLIGHTS**

RAND periodically prepares Publications Highlights to summarize our research resources in a particular policy area. The summaries offer a quick and easy topical reference guide and are also available online at [www.rand.org/congress/profiles](http://www.rand.org/congress/profiles).

▶ *See page 14.*

## **NEWSLETTERS**

RAND publishes electronic newsletters for Congress in more than a dozen different policy areas, bringing research highlights to lawmakers and their staff on the issues they care about. To view RAND's newsletter offerings and subscribe for free, visit [www.rand.org/congress/subscribe.html](http://www.rand.org/congress/subscribe.html).

▶ *See page 15.*

## **EMAIL ALERTS**

RAND's team of legislative analysts monitors the legislative agenda to send you timely email alerts containing RAND research and resources relevant to the issues you are currently considering.

▶ *See page 16.*

## **ONLINE AND MULTIMEDIA RESOURCES**

At [www.rand.org](http://www.rand.org), more than 10,000 RAND reports and commentary are available for free download. Presentations of the RAND Congressional Briefing Series are also available as streaming video on [www.rand.org](http://www.rand.org) or as an audio podcast.

▶ *See page 17.*

RAND offers briefings for lawmakers and staff regarding recent RAND research that is relevant to the legislative agenda.

The monthly **Congressional Briefing Series** takes place on Capitol Hill and typically includes presentations by RAND researchers to groups of 25 or more. All briefings include time for **questions and answers**. Recordings are available the following day as streaming video on [www.rand.org](http://www.rand.org) or as an audio podcast through iTunes®.



RAND works to offer briefings to staff in the **House and Senate**, including briefings to personal offices, committees, caucuses, or other policy groups. Interested academic or industry groups often attend.

RAND can also provide briefings to **state and local** government officials. RAND researchers are available to meet with elected officials, their staff, and state executive agencies in person, by conference call, or by video conference.

Given the breadth of RAND's research agenda, we offer briefings on a wide range of topics that include both **domestic and national security issues**.

Briefings typically feature new RAND findings and analysis, but we can also brief on previously released reports when they are of relevance to the legislative agenda. We can also arrange panels to bring together a diversity of views on a particular topic.

RAND will always **follow up** after these briefings with additional materials and information to assist you.

## Examples of Recent Congressional Briefings

---

- ▶ Marijuana Legalization: Projected Revenues, Costs, and Effects on Price and Use in California
- ▶ The Impact of Air Pollution on Hospital Spending in California
- ▶ Diversity of Service Academy Entrants and Graduates
- ▶ Cash Incentives and Military Enlistment, Attrition, and Reenlistment
- ▶ Tackling Corruption in Afghanistan: A Report from Kabul
- ▶ Civilian Defense Forces in Afghanistan
- ▶ Improving the Energy Performance of Buildings: Learning from the European Union and Australia
- ▶ Health Care on Aisle 7: The Growing Phenomenon of Retail Clinics
- ▶ Surface Transportation Finance: The End of User Financing or a New Beginning?
- ▶ Children on the Home Front: The Experience of Children from Military Families
- ▶ The Impact of Deployment on the Post-Deployment Labor Market Earnings of Reserve Components
- ▶ Ending Social Promotion: Examining the Effects of NYC's 5th Grade Promotion Policy
- ▶ Options for Controlling Health Care Spending in Massachusetts

Based on their expertise and research, RAND researchers can offer ideas and feedback about legislation. RAND will arrange meetings with these researchers for committees, caucuses, and individual offices.

RAND researchers are available to come to Capitol Hill to meet with **Members of Congress and/or staff members**, or to **state capitols**, to discuss issues within their areas of expertise.

**Conference calls or video conferences** can also be arranged to address these topics if that format is more convenient.

It is our objective to be **flexible** regarding time and venue. We make every effort to facilitate these sessions to match your scheduling needs.

Several times a year, RAND experts working in a particular issue area will be featured in **roundtable sessions** at RAND's offices in Arlington, Virginia. The roundtable format allows Congressional staff to exchange ideas with multiple experts and draw upon their collective expertise.

As a nonpartisan entity, RAND is available to participate in **bipartisan** meetings on Capitol Hill, in state capitols, or at RAND's offices.

RAND will always **follow up** after these meetings with additional materials and information to assist you.

RAND experts are available to provide testimony based on objective, analytical research addressing today's most critical domestic, defense, and international issues.

## Examples of Recent Testimony

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- ▶ Encouraging Work at Older Ages
- ▶ Considerations for the Use of Private Security Contractors in Future U.S. Military Deployments
- ▶ No Path to Glory: Deterring Homegrown Terrorism
- ▶ The Role of Incentive Pays in Military Compensation
- ▶ An Assessment of the Scientific Support Underlying the FY2011 Budget Priorities of the Office of National Drug Control Policy
- ▶ Questions of Balance: The Shifting Cross-Strait Balance and Implications for the U.S.
- ▶ Public Health Implications of Prisoner Reentry in California
- ▶ Children on the Home Front: The Experiences of Children from Military Families
- ▶ Reconstructing Haiti
- ▶ Understanding Terrorist Motivations
- ▶ Iran Sanctions: Options, Opportunities, and Consequences
- ▶ Legalizing Marijuana: Issues to Consider Before Reforming California State Law
- ▶ Issues in “Meaningful Use” of Health Information Technology for Psychiatry and Behavioral Health
- ▶ NATO After the Summit: Rebuilding Consensus
- ▶ The Development of China's Air Force Capabilities



RAND reports can be hundreds of pages long. To make the main findings more accessible, RAND publishes short research briefs—policy-oriented summaries of individual published, peer-reviewed documents or of a body of published work.

## Research Brief



NATIONAL DEFENSE RESEARCH INSTITUTE

### Security in Iraq

#### Emerging Threats as U.S. Forces Withdraw

**Other Research Areas:**  
 CHILDREN AND YOUTH  
 EDUCATION AND THE ARTS  
 ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT  
 HEALTH AND HEALTH CARE  
 INFRASTRUCTURE AND  
 TRANSPORTATION  
 INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS  
 LAW AND BUSINESS  
 NATIONAL SECURITY  
 POPULATION AND ADMIN.  
 PUBLIC SAFETY  
 SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY  
 TERRORISM AND  
 HOMELAND SECURITY

**A**fter years of bitter and violent fighting, Iraq is finally becoming more stable. The main partisan political groups—Sunnis, Kurds, and Shi’i—are cooperating to confront common concerns. The new, nonviolent political order, with the government of Iraq at its core, is winning growing popular support. Extremist groups, such as al Qaeda in Iraq, lack, at least for now, the ability to incite factional fighting. U.S. troops have begun their drawdown.

But the security situation is still shaky, and the end of U.S. occupation could bring consequences that could destroy Iraq’s hard-won progress. Iraq’s future stability and security depend mainly on two factors: first, whether the main political groups continue to engage peacefully in the political process and second, whether the Shi’i-led government of Iraq wields its growing political and military power responsibly.

As the United States departs, a new RAND monograph, *Security in Iraq: A Framework for Analyzing Emerging Threats as U.S. Forces Leave*, offers decisionmakers a conceptual model to help assess the risks ahead—particularly of fighting among Iraq’s main groups, many of which are sufficiently well armed to throw the country into a new cycle of violence. The book suggests that the most likely dangers are not necessarily the most consequential and points to what the United States can do to help guard against a renewed upsurge of large-scale factional conflict that would undercut both Iraqi and U.S. interests.

#### The Analytic Model Helps Anticipate Possible Dangers as the United States Withdraws from Iraq

The model portrays Iraq’s political system (see the figure). It illustrates that, although Iraqi political parties will continue to disagree on significant issues, the country will remain stable as long as those parties with sizable military forces resolve

#### Key Findings:

- The U.S. withdrawal from Iraq could bring consequences that could destroy Iraq’s hard won, but still shaky, stability.
- Extremist terrorism is the most likely danger, but also the least consequential for both Iraq and U.S. interests.
- The most consequential danger is also a less likely one: ethnic conflict between Kurdish forces and the Iraqi state.
- To help avert this danger, the United States must endeavor to keep mainstream political groups in the Iraqi political system and away from force.
- It should also help Iraq build strong, professional security forces able to coexist peacefully with the Kurdish military wing.

their differences within the political system rather than reverting to violence. Those fringe actors who will almost certainly use violence to achieve political goals are not sufficiently strong to throw the country back into civil war, unless they can incite one or more of the major parties to resume violent actions. The figure shows the foremost political parties and groups today, along with the military wing of each (in parentheses). It also depicts where they are currently situated within the Iraqi political order.

While the basic structure of this model will remain constant, the positions of the groups may not. Should major players leave the political process—the boundary of which is depicted by the dotted line—Iraq would be much more likely to descend back into large-scale violence.

This product is part of the RAND Corporation research brief series. RAND research briefs present policy-oriented summaries of published, peer-reviewed documents.

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RAND periodically prepares Publications Highlights to summarize our research resources in a particular policy area. The summaries offer a quick and easy topical reference guide and are also available online at [www.rand.org/congress/profiles](http://www.rand.org/congress/profiles).



## Highlights of Recent RAND Research on Early Childhood and Child Care

*For more information, contact Shirley Rabe, Director of Congressional Relations, at 703-413-1100, x5632 or [Shirley\\_Rabe@rand.org](mailto:Shirley_Rabe@rand.org), or Carmen Ferro, Education Legislative Analyst, at 703-413-1100 x5320 or [Carmen\\_Ferro@rand.org](mailto:Carmen_Ferro@rand.org).*

Four decades of scientific research has sought to determine whether early childhood intervention programs such as preschool, home visiting, parent education, and early childhood education can create long-term benefits for participating children and their families. RAND researchers have conducted a variety of projects about preschool and other early interventions, including efforts to quantify the benefits that might be achieved by universal preschool and outline the challenges states face as they scale up high-quality preschool programs to serve larger groups of children.

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**Child-Care Quality Rating and Improvement Systems in Five Pioneer States**  
**Implementation Issues and Lessons Learned**  
Gail Zellman et al., 2008

This monograph discusses the development and implementation of quality rating and improvement systems (QRIS) in Oklahoma, Colorado, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, and Ohio, five states that were among the first to develop a QRIS.

**The Economics of Early Childhood Policy**  
**What the Dismal Science Has to Say About Investing in Children**  
M. Rebecca Kilburn and Lynn A. Karoly, 2008


This paper summarizes the contributions from the field of economics, which has played an increasingly prominent role in recent discussions about early childhood policy. The insights from economics also have broader implications for social programs focused on prevention, especially during childhood, rather than later-in-life remediation.

**Who is Ahead and Who is Behind?**  
**Gaps in School Readiness and Student Achievement in the Early Grades for California's Children**  
Jill Cannon and Lynn Karoly, 2007

To evaluate the adequacy and efficiency of preschool education, the RAND Corporation has undertaken the California Preschool Study to improve understanding of achievement gaps in the early elementary grades, the adequacy of preschool education currently given, and what efficiencies or additional resources might be brought to bear in early care and education.

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A series of periodic updates to Congress on RAND's work in energy and environment

### Was the EPA's Performance Track Successful?



In the 1990s, some companies, state agencies, environmental nongovernmental organizations, and members of the research community, as well as Congress, recommended that the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) supplement existing laws and regulations with complementary approaches to reducing pollution, including voluntary programs that encourage firms to take more responsibility for their environmental performance. Thus, in 2000, the EPA created the National Environmental Performance Track program, which ran through 2009.

A RAND study assessed Performance Track's concepts, design, and implementation and found that the program had mixed success. The concepts did not provide a complete basis for the program design. The program design was successful in implementing some but not all of the original program concepts. However, the program implemented many aspects of the program design, including recruiting and screening, providing a range of member benefits, and encouraging a broad range of environmental improvements among most members, according to self-reported data. The study also found that although Performance Track found ways to work with many states and most EPA offices, the extent of that collaboration was less—and often in a different form—than originally envisioned.

The study concluded that voluntary programs can complement regulatory approaches to accelerate environmental improvement. It also provided recommendations about the future design and development of voluntary programs by EPA. For example, the study recommended that the EPA continue both experimenting with voluntary programs and trying to change corporate culture to benefit the environment, that programs be tightly focused and promote information-sharing and networking among regulated entities, that program concepts, designs, and expectations be complete, clear, and understandable, that programs protect the EPA brand, that key program outcomes be independently evaluated, and that the EPA seek to identify new ways to independently validate environmental performance.

[Read the Report: An Assessment of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's National Environmental Performance Track Program](#)

### RESEARCHER PROFILES


#### Noreen Clancy



Noreen Clancy is an environmental scientist who conducts policy research and program assessments on energy and environmental issues. Her research areas include market mechanisms for environmental protection and assessments of public and private partnerships. She has also written about research pieces on the prospects for hybrid and electric vehicles, international energy research and development investments, and the policy challenges related to dependence on petroleum. Clancy holds an M.S. in environmental science and policy from Johns Hopkins University.

[Read more about Noreen Clancy.](#)

#### Scott Hassell




Scott Hassell is an engineer experienced in the technology, policy, and business aspects of energy and environmental issues, including climate change. Hassell's current research focuses on voluntary efforts to improve corporate environmental performance and energy service innovation. He previously worked at the U.S. Department of Energy's Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy. He holds an M.S.A. from Yale University, U.S. degrees from MIT, and a B.S. from Swarthmore College.

[Read more about Scott Hassell.](#)

### INTERVIEW

#### Implementing Climate Change Policies: What We Do and Don't Know



Nicholas Burger is an associate economist at RAND whose primary research areas are environmental economics and international development. In the area of environmental economics, Burger focuses on environmental responses to economic incentives, especially in transportation and climate policy. Recently, he studied how freeway drivers respond to changing gasoline prices, was a lead author on the fourth assessment report produced by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, and has participated in the development process for California's cap-and-trade program to meet greenhouse gas emission targets. He co-authored a recent report on designing effective, viable climate change policies. He received his Ph.D. in economics from the University of California, Santa Barbara.

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RAND's team of legislative analysts monitors the legislative agenda to send you timely email alerts containing RAND research and resources relevant to the issues you are currently considering.



# ONLINE AND MULTI-MEDIA RESOURCES

# 2

At [www.rand.org](http://www.rand.org), more than 10,000 RAND reports and commentary are available for free download.

Lawmakers and their staff can also register for a free **My RAND account** to customize their online experience at [www.rand.org](http://www.rand.org). A My RAND account allows you to save research to easily retrieve when you return and to receive recommendations for RAND reports, projects, and experts in the issue areas you care about.

Presentations of the **RAND Congressional Briefing Series**, conducted monthly in Washington, D.C., are now available as **streaming video** on [www.rand.org](http://www.rand.org) or as an **audio podcast**.

RAND's presence on popular sites, such as Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube®, can also help you **discover and share RAND research findings**.



# Ways You Can Use RAND's Resources

- ▶ Press Releases
- ▶ Language for Constituent Letters
- ▶ Language for "Dear Colleague" Letters
- ▶ Floor Statements
- ▶ Policy Memoranda for Members and Committees
- ▶ Preparation for Hearings

RAND's research and experts are available to you as a resource for crafting legislation and policymaking input.

The examples in this section are intended to illustrate how your various activities—such as writing press releases, constituent letters, floor statements, and policy memoranda, as well as preparing for legislative hearings—might be strengthened by inclusion of RAND's objective research and analysis or with feedback from RAND researchers.

For purposes of illustration, the examples in this section focus on a recent RAND report that has been used extensively by policymakers to guide effective decisionmaking in the area of veterans' health: *Invisible Wounds of War: Psychological and Cognitive Injuries, Their Consequences, and Services to Assist Recovery*.

As shown below and in the pages that follow, key findings from RAND research and reports are conveniently highlighted in our Research Briefs.



### Key Findings:

- Approximately 18.5 percent of U.S. servicemembers who have returned from Afghanistan and Iraq currently have post-traumatic stress disorder or depression; and 19.5 percent report experiencing a traumatic brain injury during deployment.
- Roughly half of those who need treatment for these conditions seek it, but only slightly more than half who receive treatment get minimally adequate care.
- Improving access to *high-quality* care (i.e., treatment supported by scientific evidence) can be cost-effective and improve recovery rates.

## Sample Press Release

### *Veterans' Mental Health Care*

September 20, 2010  
Contact: Staffer Y  
(202) 225-5555

#### REP. X APPLAUDS NEW RAND CORPORATION REPORT URGING QUALITY MENTAL HEALTH CARE FOR AMERICA'S RETURNING VETERANS

Washington, D.C.—Rep. X (State-District) today applauded a RAND Corporation report that assesses the quality mental health and cognitive care needs of America's returning veterans.

"I understand the needs of wounded veterans and their struggle with finding quality mental health care," Rep. X said. "I hope this new study by the respected RAND Corporation will lead the nation to reexamine its approach to veterans' mental health care and ease the burden on our nation's veterans."

According to the RAND report, "Approximately 18.5 percent of U.S. servicemembers who have returned from Afghanistan and Iraq currently have post-traumatic stress disorder or depression, and 19.5 percent report experiencing a traumatic brain injury during deployment."

Rep. X urges Congress to address this important issue and improve access to high-quality, cost-effective mental health care for our soldiers returning home.

#### Key Findings:

- Approximately 18.5 percent of U.S. servicemembers who have returned from Afghanistan and Iraq currently have post-traumatic stress disorder or depression; and 19.5 percent report experiencing a traumatic brain injury during deployment.
- Roughly half of those who need treatment for these conditions seek it, but only slightly more than half who receive treatment get minimally adequate care.
- Improving access to *high-quality care* (i.e., treatment supported by scientific evidence) can be cost-effective and improve recovery rates.



## Sample Constituent Letter

### *Veterans' Mental Health Care*

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September 20, 2010  
Senator X (State)  
Senate Office Building  
(202) 225-5555

Dear Constituent:

I understand the needs of our nation's veterans and their struggle with access to and the quality of post-deployment mental health care. I continue to work on improving access to high-quality care (i.e., treatment supported by scientific evidence) that is cost-effective and improves recovery rates.

You may be interested to know that the RAND Corporation recently released a report whose findings show that approximately 18.5 percent of U.S. servicemembers who have returned from Afghanistan and Iraq currently have post-traumatic stress disorder or depression, and 19.5 percent report experiencing a traumatic brain injury during deployment. Roughly half of those who need treatment for these conditions seek it, but only slightly more than half who receive treatment get minimally adequate care. Please visit RAND's website at [www.rand.org/congress](http://www.rand.org/congress) for a copy of this report.

Please know that I will carefully look into cosponsoring legislation that improves mental health care for veterans. I thank you again for your interest in this very important issue.

Sincerely,

Senator X (State)

#### Key Findings:

- Approximately 18.5 percent of U.S. servicemembers who have returned from Afghanistan and Iraq currently have post-traumatic stress disorder or depression; and 19.5 percent report experiencing a traumatic brain injury during deployment.
- Roughly half of those who need treatment for these conditions seek it, but only slightly more than half who receive treatment get minimally adequate care.
- Improving access to *high-quality* care (i.e., treatment supported by scientific evidence) can be cost-effective and improve recovery rates.

## Sample “Dear Colleague” Letter

### *Veterans’ Mental Health Care*

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September 20, 2010

TO: ALL MEMBERS OF THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS

FROM: Representative X (State-District)

Dear Colleague:

I’d like to draw your attention to a very important issue: quality mental health care for our nation’s veterans. I understand the needs of veterans and their struggle to access quality mental health care and plan to form a new caucus to study this issue in more depth. I hope you will consider joining me.

You might be interested in a recent report by the RAND Corporation, a highly respected, nonpartisan research institution, that found approximately 18.5 percent of U.S. servicemembers who have returned from Afghanistan and Iraq currently have post-traumatic stress disorder or depression, and 19.5 percent report experiencing a traumatic brain injury during deployment. Roughly half of those who need treatment for these conditions seek it, but only slightly more than half who receive treatment get minimally adequate care. Please visit RAND’s website at [www.rand.org/congress](http://www.rand.org/congress) for a copy of this report.

The health of our nation’s returning soldiers is a key priority, and I believe this RAND study will be a great resource.

Thank you for your time,

Representative X

#### Key Findings:

- Approximately 18.5 percent of U.S. servicemembers who have returned from Afghanistan and Iraq currently have post-traumatic stress disorder or depression; and 19.5 percent report experiencing a traumatic brain injury during deployment.
- Roughly half of those who need treatment for these conditions seek it, but only slightly more than half who receive treatment get minimally adequate care.
- Improving access to *high-quality* care (i.e., treatment supported by scientific evidence) can be cost-effective and improve recovery rates.

## Sample Floor Statement

### *Veterans' Mental Health Care*

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September 20, 2010  
Representative X (State-District)

Mr./Madame Speaker:

Thank you for giving me the time to speak today on a very important issue: mental health care for our returning soldiers. Congress needs to increase and improve the capacity of the mental health care system to deliver evidence-based care, change policies to encourage more servicemembers and veterans to seek needed care, deliver evidence-based care in all settings, and invest in research to close knowledge gaps and plan effectively.

I'd like to state for the record that the RAND Corporation, a highly respected, nonpartisan research institution, recently released a report that found that approximately 18.5 percent of U.S. servicemembers who have returned from Afghanistan and Iraq currently have post-traumatic stress disorder or depression, and 19.5 percent report experiencing a traumatic brain injury during deployment. Please visit RAND's website at [www.rand.org/congress](http://www.rand.org/congress) for a copy of this report.

I will soon be introducing legislation that addresses these issues.

I yield to the gentleman from California.

#### Key Findings:

- Approximately 18.5 percent of U.S. servicemembers who have returned from Afghanistan and Iraq currently have post-traumatic stress disorder or depression; and 19.5 percent report experiencing a traumatic brain injury during deployment.
- Roughly half of those who need treatment for these conditions seek it, but only slightly more than half who receive treatment get minimally adequate care.
- Improving access to *high-quality* care (i.e., treatment supported by scientific evidence) can be cost-effective and improve recovery rates.

## Sample Policy Memorandum for Members and Committees

### *Veterans' Mental Health Care*

#### INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

**TO:** REPRESENTATIVE X  
**FROM:** STAFFER Y, LEGISLATIVE ASSISTANT, HEALTH CARE  
**SUBJECT:** MENTAL HEALTH CARE FOR VETERANS  
**CC:** CHIEF OF STAFF

Mental health care for our nation's returning veterans is an extremely important issue for the constituents of your district, as indicated by the innumerable telephone calls, letters, and emails we receive daily.

The RAND Corporation recently released a report that found that approximately 18.5 percent of U.S. servicemembers who have returned from Afghanistan and Iraq currently have post-traumatic stress disorder or depression, and 19.5 percent report experiencing a traumatic brain injury during deployment. Also, roughly half of those who need treatment for these conditions seek it, but only slightly more than half who receive treatment get minimally adequate care. If you would like a copy of the report, I can obtain it immediately.

The report makes the following recommendations: increase and improve the capacity of the mental health care system to deliver evidence-based care, change policies to encourage more servicemembers and veterans to seek needed care, deliver evidence-based care in all settings, and invest in research to close knowledge gaps and plan effectively.

Veterans of your district make up a large number of the constituency. I recommend the following methods of action: e-newsletters, town hall meetings, and Congressional hearings.

#### Key Findings:

- Approximately 18.5 percent of U.S. servicemembers who have returned from Afghanistan and Iraq currently have post-traumatic stress disorder or depression; and 19.5 percent report experiencing a traumatic brain injury during deployment.
- Roughly half of those who need treatment for these conditions seek it, but only slightly more than half who receive treatment get minimally adequate care.
- Improving access to *high-quality* care (i.e., treatment supported by scientific evidence) can be cost-effective and improve recovery rates.

## Sample Preparation for Congressional Hearings

### *Veterans' Mental Health Care*

House Committee on Veterans' Affairs  
Committee Hearing  
September 20, 2010  
Z House Office Building  
(202) 225-5555

#### **Mental Health and Cognitive Care Needs of America's Returning Veterans: Room for Improvement?**

Are you familiar with the RAND Corporation's recent report that states that approximately 18.5 percent of U.S. servicemembers who have returned from Afghanistan and Iraq currently have post-traumatic stress disorder or depression, and 19.5 percent report experiencing a traumatic brain injury during deployment?

Did you know that roughly half of those who need treatment for these conditions seek it, but only slightly more than half who receive treatment get minimally adequate care?

Do you feel current mental health programs for veterans are adequate?

What recommendations would you make for improved policies in this area?

Can you recommend any other studies in this area that might provide additional insights?

#### **Key Findings:**

- Approximately 18.5 percent of U.S. servicemembers who have returned from Afghanistan and Iraq currently have post-traumatic stress disorder or depression; and 19.5 percent report experiencing a traumatic brain injury during deployment.
- Roughly half of those who need treatment for these conditions seek it, but only slightly more than half who receive treatment get minimally adequate care.
- Improving access to *high-quality* care (i.e., treatment supported by scientific evidence) can be cost-effective and improve recovery rates.

# RAND Contact Information

- ▶ Office of Congressional Relations
- ▶ Office of External Affairs

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# Notes





