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MICHIGAN HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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Rep. Jennifer Conlin
Chair, Military, Veterans and Homeland Security Committee
Anderson House Office Building, 124 N Capitol Ave
Lansing, MI 48933

Dear Chair Conlin,

I am writing to request a committee hearing on House Bill 5146, which proposes the establishment of a Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy Pilot program (HBOT). This legislation holds immense promise in providing much-needed relief and support to our veterans grappling with Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). The Invisible wounds are the signature wounds of the Iraq and Afghanistan conflicts with an estimated 877,450 wounded Veterans in the U.S. The estimated annual societal economic impact to Michigan voters is \$840.4 million, 50% of the cost associated with TBI/PTSD Veteran caregivers. During this term, both Governor Gretchen Whitmer and the Chair of the Health Policy Committee, Representative Julie Rogers have expressed their public support for Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy (HBOT) with the former issuing a proclamation in support and the latter introducing a resolution in support.

As you are aware, TBI/PTSD is a pervasive and debilitating condition that affects over 877,000 veterans across our nation, an estimated 24,201 in Michigan. Despite the various treatments available, many veterans still struggle to find effective solutions that alleviate their symptoms and improve their quality of life. HBOT has emerged as a promising alternative, with 21 clinical IRB trials completed since 2007 reflecting on the safety and efficacy for Veterans with TBI/PTSD.

House Bill 5146 outlines a pilot program aimed at exploring the efficacy of HBOT specifically for veterans with TBI/PTSD. By establishing this program, we can offer innovative treatment options and demonstrate our commitment to supporting those who have bravely served our country.

A committee hearing on this important legislation will provide a platform for experts, stakeholders, and veteran advocates to discuss the impact of HBOT on veterans' mental health outcomes. It would allow for a thorough examination of the scientific evidence supporting HBOT as a viable treatment option for TBI/PTSD, how it eliminates suicide ideation, and provide insight into the practical implementation of the pilot program. The hearing would enable committee members to engage in meaningful dialogue, address concerns, review the medical treatment evidence, and make informed decisions regarding House Bill 5146.

As representatives entrusted with the well-being of our veterans, it is imperative that we prioritize initiatives aimed at improving their access to comprehensive care and support services. I urge you to consider scheduling a committee hearing to discuss House Bill 5146 at your earliest convenience. By doing so, we can take a significant step forward in fulfilling our duty to honor and serve those who have sacrificed so much for our nation and the state of Michigan.

If you have any questions or concerns, my staff and I would be happy to assist. I look forward to your response and the opportunity to continue this important discussion.

Sincerely,