

JAMES M. INHOFE  
OKLAHOMA

WASHINGTON OFFICE  
205 RUSSELL SENATE OFFICE BUILDING  
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-3603  
(202) 224-4721

TULSA OFFICE  
1924 SOUTH UTICA, SUITE 530  
TULSA, OK 74104  
(918) 748-5111

OKLAHOMA CITY OFFICE  
1900 N.W. EXPRESSWAY, SUITE 1210  
OKLAHOMA CITY, OK 73118  
(405) 608-4381

COMMITTEES:  
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# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-3603

July 21, 2011

The Honorable Carl Levin  
Chairman  
Senate Armed Services Committee  
228 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable John McCain  
Ranking Member  
Senate Armed Services Committee  
228 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairmen Levin and Ranking Member McCain:

I truly appreciate the efforts of the committee to address service member suicide during the July 2010 hearing, however it has now been some 12 months since our committee has directly addressed the twin issues of Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).

My continued engagement with experts from the Department of Defense, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and our veterans themselves has shown me that the nation still has important strides to make in preventing, diagnosing, and treating these wounds. Media reports and the statements of senior defense officials as well indicate that there are both serious shortfalls and serious efforts underway to address those shortfalls.

Therefore, I respectfully request another hearing to address TBI and PTSD with witnesses from the medical community outside of the Department of Defense, scientists and service members who have been treated for TBI and PTSD. As you well know, there are many areas within these broad topics that deserve our attention including current research into the brain, leadership and strategic direction at the various military research centers, progress and challenges associated with diagnosis and treatment, and various advances in treatment of military patients. I am particularly concerned by the lack of progress in identifying new treatments, the continued prescription of dubious drug regimens for our servicemembers, and leadership issues within the institutions that this committee empowered to address TBI and PTSD. I also believe that the DOD can gain significant progress in partnership with civilian researcher and medical professionals.

Thank you, again, for your efforts on these issues. I know that you both share my sentiment that our servicemembers should not only receive the best training and equipment but also receive the best care when they are injured.

Sincerely,



James Inhofe  
United States Senator