

Servicemembers and Veterans Empowerment and Support (SAVES) Act

(S. 1245/ H.R. 2576)



MST SURVIVORS DESERVE BETTER

Support is Critical for Veterans

Military sexual trauma (MST) — which includes sexual harassment or assault during service — can have impacts long after leaving the military. Survivors often face barriers to care and benefits despite efforts to expand peer support and ease claims. Many choose not to report due to fear of retaliation, lack of trust in the system, and re-traumatization during the claims process — leaving survivors struggling with limited documentation, prolonged timelines, and a lack of closure.

★ THE ISSUE:

Why MST Survivors Need Our Support

- ✓ MST can cause lasting psychological and emotional effects, including post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), depression, relationship challenges, and isolation.
- ✓ Survivors face higher risks of suicide, drug overdose, and serious health issues, often at younger ages.
- ✓ Congress has enacted new laws to strengthen MST support, improve coordination, and expand peer assistance for survivors, but more is needed.

FAST FACTS:



1 in 8 WWP warriors are MST survivors: According to the WWP Warrior Survey, approximately 12.4% of post-9/11 wounded, ill, or injured veterans reported experiencing MST.



Backlog is growing: As of July 2025, VA reported more than 27,000 MST claims pending, with over 13,000 stuck in backlog status, despite the establishment of a Special Operations Center for MST in 2022.

★ THE SOLUTION:

Pass the Servicemembers and Veterans Empowerment and Support (SAVES) Act (S. 1245/ H.R. 2576)

Original Sponsors:

Sen. Richard Blumenthal (D-CT),
Rep. Chellie Pingree (D-ME-1)

• MST modernization:

Expands the definition of MST to include online harassment and digital abuse; directs VA to study how technology can support survivors.

• Claims process improvements:

Creates a workgroup to review MST-related disability claims, enhances rater and staff training, and evaluates current standards.

• Access to care:

Extends MST-related counseling and services to members of the Reserve Components.



Survivors of MST deserve care, support, and dignity. Wounded Warrior Project® calls on Congress to advance the SAVES Act (H.R. 2576 / S. 1245) and ensure we meet the needs of those who have survived MST.