

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

February 26, 2008

Dear Colleague:

The conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan have placed a heavy burden on our military and their loved ones. Over 1.6 million military personnel have been deployed since September 11, 2001. Nearly 550,000 of these troops have been deployed more than once. In addition to the physical injuries sustained, many service members have experienced psychological symptoms directly related to their deployment.

Our military and civilian leaders are addressing the psychological needs of the troops through a variety of programs. However, the tremendous number of individuals affected makes it difficult for the military or the Department of Veterans Affairs to respond adequately to their mental health needs. Moreover, returning combat veterans suffering from depression, anxiety, and post-traumatic stress disorder are not routinely seeking the mental health treatment they need.

We want you to know about an organization that has stepped up to make services available for our military personnel and their families. Give an Hour is a nonprofit organization creating a national network of mental health professionals who are literally giving an hour a week to provide free mental health services to returning troops and their families. Give an Hour currently has almost 1,000 professionals participating in its network including psychologists, psychiatrists, social workers, substance abuse counselors, pastoral counselors, and marriage and family therapists.

By providing services that are separate from the military or the VA, Give an Hour offers an option for men and women who might otherwise fail to seek or have access to appropriate mental health care. In addition to returning troops and their spouses and children, Give an Hour is also offering services to parents, siblings, and others who are not entitled to receive mental health benefits through the military. For more information, please visit www.giveanhour.org.

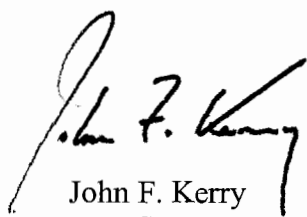
Please join us in supporting Give an Hour in its effort to provide needed mental health care to our troops and their families by:

- Alerting staff in your state offices about the valuable services Give an Hour can provide to your constituent military personnel and their families;
- Encouraging the mental health associations in your state to volunteer their services in conjunction with Give an Hour. There are 400,000 mental health professionals in our country. Give an Hour plans to recruit 10 percent for this critical effort; and

- Reaching out to the military leaders in your state to partner with Give an Hour and ensure that all of our returning troops and their families are aware of the services being provided by this unique organization.

For additional information, please contact Brady Van Engelen of Senator Kerry's staff at 4-7024, or Sarah Pullen of Senator Hagel's staff at 4-4224. Thank you.

Sincerely,



John F. Kerry
U.S. Senator



Chuck Hagel
U.S. Senator