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Veteran Suicide Prevention Legislation Passes the Florida House

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. – Today, the Florida House unanimously passed [Senate Bill 1712](#), the Veteran Suicide Prevention Training Pilot Program, sponsored by **State Senator Danny Burgess (R-Zephyrhills)** and **State Representative Ben Diamond (D-St. Petersburg)**. This bipartisan legislation will establish a pilot program directing the Florida Department of Veterans Affairs to offer each county and city veteran service officer specialized training and certification in preventing veteran suicide. Veteran service officers participating in the program will receive training to provide emergency crisis counseling for veterans experiencing a mental health crisis. The bill includes an appropriation of \$500,000 for the Department of Veterans' Affairs to implement the program.

Both the Florida House and Senate have passed **SB 1712**, the companion bill to [HB 1315](#). The bill is now being sent to the governor's desk and awaits his signature.

In response to the passage of **SB 1712**, **Representative Diamond** offered the following statement:

"Over the past few years, my legislative office has received calls from countless veterans in our district seeking support. This bill will ensure that veteran service officers in communities all across Florida receive training to identify indicators of elevated suicide risk and provide emergency crisis referrals for veterans in distress. I am grateful for my colleagues' support of this legislation which will open up the lines of communication between veterans and local service officers, ensure they know they are not alone, and help end the national tragedy of veteran suicide."

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