



## SERVE Act: Thank You to Our Advocates and Where We Are Now

WASHINGTON, D.C. (July 21, 2020) – The Eating Disorders Coalition for Research, Policy & Action (EDC) would like to thank our advocates for their tireless work over recent weeks in support of the Supporting Eating Disorders Recovery Through Vital Expansion (SERVE) Act ([H.R. 2767/S. 2673](#)), led by Reps. Moulton (D-MA) and Mast (R-FL), and Sens. Shaheen (D-NH) and McSally (R-AZ). The

SERVE Act will permit military families over 20 years old to receive higher levels of eating disorders care, ensure military members and their families have access to comprehensive eating disorders treatment, and train Commanding Officers and supervisory personnel about the early warning signs of all mental illnesses.

The EDC's advocacy base relentlessly reached out to their Members of Congress through a series of Action Alerts and other related efforts. Hundreds of messages were sent encouraging Members to support the inclusion of the SERVE Act within the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), a bill which Congress passes each year that specifies the budget and expenditures for the Department of Defense (DoD). In large part thanks to these efforts and the leadership of Sens. Shaheen (D-NH) and McSally (R-AZ), the Senate Armed Services Committee (SASC) included report language based on the SERVE Act within the Senate [version](#) (see page 232) of the NDAA encouraging the DoD to enact the provisions.

EDC advocates also reached out to their House Representatives in large numbers, encouraging them to support and vote for the inclusion of [Amendment #608](#) based on the SERVE Act within their version of the NDAA. Specifically, the SERVE Act leads Rep. Moulton (D-MA) and Rep. Mast (R-FL), and Rules Committee Vice Chairman Hastings (D-FL), went above and beyond in their advocacy for this legislation, and we are appreciative of the additional amendment co-sponsors: Reps. Escobar (D-TX), Fitzpatrick (R-PA), Levin (D-CA), Van Drew (R-NJ), Rouda (D-CA), Adams (D-NC), Deutch (D-FL), Rice (D-NY), Craig (D-MN), Cárdenas (D-CA), Tonko (D-NY), Chu (D-CA), Castor (D-FL), Gottheimer (D-NJ), Raskin (D-MD), Crow (D-CO), and Trahan (D-MA). Despite these efforts, the House did not end up including the SERVE Act within the House NDAA, largely due to the cost of expanding the benefits for military families.

While the endeavor to get a piece of legislation passed through Congress is never straightforward or easy, there is still a path forward for the SERVE Act. We will once again call on EDC's formidable advocacy base to help with this effort. Our next undertaking will involve urging Congress to preserve the Senate report language when the House and Senate reconcile their two respective versions of the NDAA through the conference process. We trust our advocates will again speak with resounding voices to support this effort.

We have only gotten this far due to the EDC's committed advocates and partner organizations, and we will only get the SERVE Act across the finish line with your help. Thank you to our advocates for your commendable efforts on the SERVE Act, and we look forward to working with you on the last stages to get this bill enacted.

*The Eating Disorders Coalition for Research, Policy & Action (EDC) is a Washington, DC-based, federal advocacy organization comprised of advocacy organizations, academics, treatment providers, family/loved ones of children with eating disorders and people experiencing eating disorders nationwide. The EDC advances the recognition of eating disorders as a public health priority throughout the United States. Additional resources can also be found at [eatingdisorderscoalition.org](http://eatingdisorderscoalition.org).*

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