

## Why Is The Veteran Important?

Twenty Two. That is the number of veterans who commit suicide day, that's 154 a week, 660 a month, and 8030 brave men and women a year. Why is this number so high, why is this what the vets, who have battled so selflessly for our country, come home to.

These people who have fought wars that most Americans dare not even discuss in their own home for fear that we may disagree with someone. These men and women who have faced terror everyday to protect the freedoms that many people enjoy in the comfort of their own homes. Why is the Veteran important, because he fights for liberty while people protest in the streets claiming that their sacrifice is nothing, without realizing that the only reason they are allowed to do that is because those men and women have fought and died for their right to freedom of speech.

Have you ever heard the expression “freedom isn’t free” ? The importance of this expression was not yet apparent to me for a long time until I started to listen to politicians on the news and hearing of the protests in the streets and it made me angry. I remember thinking to myself how dare these people. How dare they destroy national monuments, how dare they disrespect the flag which flies because of the death of hundreds of thousands of people. How dare they sit and claim that the veteran's sacrifice is nothing while they have yet to lift a finger in service of our great country. Then I remember that these ungrateful people are able to do this because of the sacrifice of those who fight and have fought for their freedoms. Why is the veteran important? Because he was willing to do the things that others won’t. He is willing to put his life on the line for people who don’t even understand his sacrifice, or accept it as necessary for our country to be as free as it is.

From 2007 to 2008 A friend of mine, army specialist Jason Hubbard spent his time developing and eventually passing the Hubbard Act, a nationwide law ensuring the family members of military personnel who had been honorably discharged, before the end of their contract, would still receive health care and other veteran benefits. After being honorably discharged from the army himself and after the death of his two brothers in Iraq, Jason found that he had lost not only his brothers but any benefits he would have received had he continued to serve. Due to the sole survivor act, the government separated him from service and requested that he not only pay back his enlistment bonus, but they denied him his healthcare insurance as well. To any sensible person that would seem atrocious and many people agreed that it was, but why was this happening at all? Why were the benefits of serving members taken away after they had been Honorably discharged, they had fought and been told to go home because their sacrifice was enough to break them. Why were these people forced to leave service only to go home and realize that they were seen as civilians once more, civilians with the memories of war, and wounds of battle. Soldiers thrown back into the world without any help from the government, trying to make a living in an ungrateful society.

Ronald Reagan once said, “History teaches us wars begin when governments believe the price of aggression is cheap,” Governments around the world and throughout history have shown that the sacrifices of veterans are not something they see as specifically important, for years veterans have been ridiculed in courts, and underrepresented by politicians why is it that the politicians of the age take for granted the death of so many amazing and impeccable people, why are their policies so infringing and so trespassing on the rights of those who fight for their freedoms. Our founding fathers were veterans themselves not politicians, they founded our country on the beliefs of our personal freedoms, they fought in the revolutionary war, George

Washington, was a general before he was president. These men were vets themselves; they did not focus on making policies and laws, they focused on protecting the liberty that every American citizen possessed, they focused on ensuring that all Americans had the freedoms of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

While writing this speech, a verse in Matthew chapter four came immediately to mind, during the Sermon on the Mount Jesus says “Blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called the children of God.” The definition of peacemaker is, a person who brings about peace, especially by reconciling adversaries, every man and woman who has fought in service of our country from the revolutionary war, to the campaigns in afghanistan and Iraq is a peacemaker, every person who has laid down their life for our country to remain free and for the freedoms that we possess to never be taken away are peacemakers. You are all peacemakers and I pray for your brothers and sisters who fight for our beautiful country and I pray for those who didn’t get the warm welcome home that all service members should receive. As Americans it is our job to protect those who have protected us, we need to come together to ensure the safety and the security of our veterans because they have fought and died for us, they are the vital breath in the body that is America, they are the national symbol of courage and bravery, they are the backbone of our great nation. So while they make our country the land of the free, we must come together to make it the home of the brave.