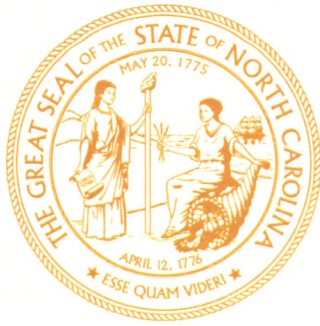




State of North Carolina

JOSH STEIN
GOVERNOR

NORTH CAROLINA VETERANS SUICIDE AWARENESS AND REMEMBRANCE DAY

2026

BY THE GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA

A PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, the men and women of our military and the veterans of North Carolina represent the highest tradition of selfless service to our state and nation, and their sacrifices deserve our eternal gratitude and our active support; and

WHEREAS, military personnel and veterans continue to face a disproportionate and heartbreaking risk of death by suicide, with veterans nearly twice as likely to die by suicide compared to their civilian counterparts and more than 20 veterans and military members dying by suicide each day across the United States; and

WHEREAS, North Carolina is one of the most military-connected states in the nation, home to U.S. Army Garrison Fort Bragg; Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point; Marine Corps Air Station New River; Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune; and Seymour Johnson Air Force Base, as well as the U.S. Department of Homeland Security ("DHS") Coast Guard Base Elizabeth City, the North Carolina National Guard and numerous other smaller military facilities and structures; and hundreds of thousands of veterans, active-duty service members, and military families call our state home and are woven into the fabric of every community from the mountains to the coast; and

WHEREAS, suicide prevention services are vastly underutilized by our military and veterans due to the deeply entrenched stigma surrounding mental health, suicide, and seeking treatment within the warrior culture of military and veteran communities, and breaking this stigma is essential to saving lives; and

WHEREAS, the Suicide Awareness and Remembrance Flag – the SAR Flag – was created by United States Air Force Veteran Kevin W. Hertell in memory of his cousin, Senior Airman Robert McRae Dean of the United States Air Force, who died by suicide in 2016, and the SAR Flag now stands as a powerful national symbol of remembrance, hope, and commitment to ending veteran and military suicide; and

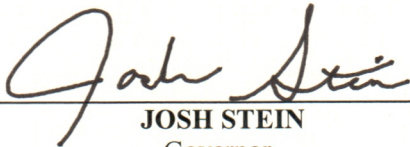
WHEREAS, the SAR Flag serves as a tangible symbol of hope to living veterans and military members, reminding them that their community stands with them and that stigma-free, compassionate treatment is available to facilitate suicide prevention and support recovery; and

WHEREAS, September is recognized nationally as Suicide Prevention Awareness Month, making September 22 an especially fitting and powerful date to focus our collective attention on the unique and profound challenges faced by those who have served our nation and to honor those we have lost; and

WHEREAS, the State of North Carolina honors the service of our military and veterans, to remember those we have lost, and to ensure that every servicemember and veteran in our state knows they are seen, valued, and never alone;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, JOSH STEIN, Governor of the State of North Carolina, do hereby proclaim September 22, 2026, as "**NORTH CAROLINA VETERANS SUICIDE AWARENESS AND REMEMBRANCE DAY**" in North Carolina and commend its observance.




JOSH STEIN
Governor

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the Great Seal of the State of North Carolina at the Capitol in Raleigh this eighth day of September in the year of our Lord two thousand and twenty-sixth and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and fifty-first.