

Precision Brain Health Research Act

(S. 800)



UNSEEN IMPACT

Advancing Research on Blast-Related Brain Injuries

★ THE ISSUE:

An Overlooked Threat to Brain Health

- ✓ Veterans exposed to repeated, low-level blasts may suffer long-term brain injury, but the science and research are still catching up.
- ✓ Service members in certain military roles face repeated low-level blast exposure from weapons fire and explosions. Even without a diagnosed traumatic brain injury (TBI), these repeated exposures can silently harm the brain over time and subject veterans to symptoms like insomnia, anxiety, and depression.
- ✓ The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and Department of Defense (DoD) currently lack the full picture on how these exposures affect long-term brain health — meaning some veterans may not receive the care or benefits they need and have earned.

FAST FACTS: BRAIN INJURIES BY THE NUMBERS



514,000+ Service members have been diagnosed with TBI since 2000.



Four in five TBIs are classified as mild TBIs (concussions), which can still lead to lasting physical, mental, and cognitive issues.

★ Too many veterans are living with the long-term impacts of blast exposure without a clear path to care.

Wounded Warrior Project® calls on Congress to advance the Precision Brain Health Research Act (S. 800) and strengthen research, diagnosis, and treatment for those living with these unseen wounds of war.

★ THE SOLUTION:

Pass the Precision Brain Health Research Act (S. 800)

Introduced by Sens. Jerry Moran (R-KS) and Angus King (I-ME)

- This bipartisan bill builds on VA's 2022 Precision Medicine for Veterans Initiative to personalize brain and mental health care based on veterans' unique exposure history.

What the bill does:

- Expands biomarker research to include low-level blast exposure, alongside TBI, post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, and anxiety.
- Directs VA and partners, including the National Academies, to study the cognitive effects of repetitive low-level blast exposure and identify high-risk military roles.
- Strengthens the research base needed to improve care and ensure veterans get the benefits they've earned.

✗ MYTHS vs. ✓ FACTS

Myth: "We already have TBI research — this is just duplicating efforts."

Fact: While TBI research is ongoing, low-level blast exposure is a different and less understood threat. Many veterans with blast-related symptoms do not meet the diagnostic criteria for TBI — meaning they may be misdiagnosed, untreated, or ineligible for care or benefits.

Myth: "Precision medicine is too complex or too costly."

Fact: VA's existing Precision Medicine for Veterans Initiative is already underway. This bill simply expands that initiative to include a new risk factor — no new infrastructure or systems are needed.