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The Men and Women that Fight for Us

Soldiers go through incredibly intense conditions every day in order to give citizens freedoms that are often taken for granted. Sadly, these soldiers often come home with diseases or disorders, such as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). PTSD is a disorder that affects people who have witnessed or been through a scary, dangerous, or harmful event. PTSD is most commonly caused by war, but it can be caused by anything traumatic. I will first cover how veterans with PTSD cannot support themselves with their limited income. Next I will cover how the veterans deserve more because they served their country. Finally, I will explain how unemployment is a big problem for veterans with PTSD. Although veterans with PTSD receive some financial benefit from the government, the veterans deserve more compensation because the amount of money they receive is not enough to support themselves, the veterans were in life-threatening situations every day to defend our freedoms, yet only make a limited income while serving, and lastly because it is hard for veterans with PTSD to get a job after they serve.

The U.S. Government assists a lot of citizens with financial problems, but veterans do not receive enough financial help. Veterans with PTSD, specifically, only receive a limited amount of money. The government determines how much compensation someone receives based on the severity of PTSD. Exact statistics are not given out, but the army automatically gives a 50% PTSD rating. The amount of money each veteran receives with this rating ranges from $838.64 - $1,049.64, based on the amount of people living with the veteran (“Veterans Benefits Tables”). This is only between $10,063.68 and $12,595.68 a year, which is not nearly enough money to support a person, let alone a whole family, for an entire year. Considering this, veterans with PTSD often end up in poverty and very little ways to gain more money.

 The veterans were in life-threatening situations every day to defend our freedoms as citizens of the United States, yet only earn a minimal amount of pay. This is not only devastating during service, but also after service because veterans need another job to support themselves and their family. According to the U.S. Army, the pay for active duty soldiers ranges from $18,802.80 - $36,403.20 a year, depending on rank and time spent serving. This is also barely enough money to support a person and a small family. If any medical issues occur, such as PTSD, the veteran will either have to seek treatment but live with practically no money or not seek treatment at all. A situation like this should never be a decision that a veteran should have to make.

 Everybody eventually needs to support themselves and their family with a job, especially those who have a burden of extra expenses. Sadly, it is extremely difficult for veterans with PTSD to get a job. According to Pauline Anderson from Medscape, almost two-thirds of all PTSD patients are unemployed. This isn’t just caused by their own personal deficiencies, but because of future coworkers. As stated by Richard May, personnel at 69 leading companies were asked how they felt about hiring veterans with PTSD and 61% said that they felt uncertain about their own safety. Not only does unemployment hurt these veterans financially, but unemployment hurts them emotionally because some studies show that employment can help with PTSD. Unemployment doesn’t just hurt the person/family that cannot get a job, but also negatively impacts the entire government/economy.

 This paper has proven that although veterans with PTSD receive some financial benefit from the government, the veterans deserve more compensation because the amount of money they receive is not enough to support themselves, the veterans were in life-threatening situations every day to defend our freedoms, yet only make a limited income while serving, and lastly because it is hard for veterans with PTSD to get a job after they serve. There is a possible solution to the limited spending the government provides for veterans with PTSD. As reported by Brianna Ehley, the government spends $3 billion to treat veterans with PTSD on treatment programs that are not even proven to work. This money can instead be granted to the veterans directly to seek personal help if needed. After all, veterans are the ones that fought for our freedom and they are not receiving the amount of benefits that they need and ultimately deserve after serving.

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