

I am currently a senior in high school but I was just 6yrs old when my dad was injured. So, I can not remember a time when my dad was healthy and didn't struggle with PTSD. One of the hardest ways my dad's PTSD affects us is during sports events or public settings. Sports events are difficult because my dad absolutely loves watching my brother and I compete at what we love. Unfortunately, these types of public settings overwhelm my dad because of his PTSD. What should be a fun day for a normal family, is always very stressful for us all. For my dad, he is unable to quiet his mind and body to enjoy the time with his family. He is usually overwhelmed and stressed out by the groups of unknown people. For my mom, it means being hyper-focused on caring for my dad and attempting to make him as comfortable as possible even though that is a tall order. My brother and I are often as focused on our dad as we are on what we are competing in. One instance of this was last year at my district track meet. I was throwing next to a busy street where a car with an extremely loud exhaust drove by several times. I remember worrying about how that car could ruin his day and send him into extreme stress. While this is just one example I remember well, there are countless others of my dad's struggles affecting our whole family. Even though this bill isn't a cure for PTSD, it would help first responders like my dad. I hope you will pass Senate Bill 588 to support families like mine and help alleviate the stress of finances caused by line-of-duty injury or disease.