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### **Post-Traumatic Stress Injury Awareness Day**

**PIERRE, S.D.** – At the request of the South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs, Governor Kristi Noem has proclaimed June 27, 2019, as “Post-Traumatic Stress Injury Awareness Day,” a day to reflect on the causes, symptoms and treatment of post-traumatic stress injuries.

“The brave men and women of the United States Armed Forces who proudly serve the United States and risk their lives to protect our freedom deserve the investment of every possible resource to ensure their lasting physical, mental, and emotional well-being,” the Governor’s proclamation states.

PTSI, which is commonly known as Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, is a normal reaction to abnormal circumstances and affects more than 5 million Americans each year. It is most commonly associated with veterans – and has been known by many other terms, including shell shock and combat fatigue – but PTSI can affect anyone at any age.

“Our veterans face many life-changing and dangerous situations when they put their lives on the line in defense of our nation’s freedoms,” said Greg Whitlock, Secretary of the South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs. “Raising awareness of PTSI is an important step in ensuring veterans have the support they need to make a successful transition back to civilian life. This will help with increased understanding of unseen emotional struggles resulting from PTSI and is critical to the health and well-being of our returning heroes.”

It is estimated that between 11 and 20 percent of veterans experience symptoms of PTSI, including up to 20 percent of Iraq and Afghanistan veterans.

“Every veteran processes their military experiences differently, but for those that are experiencing nightmares, flashbacks, irritability or other symptoms of PTSI, help is available,” said Whitlock. “Specialized treatment for PTSI is available through the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs at <https://www.ptsd.va.gov/>.”