[Your Name]

[Your Address]

[City, State, Zip]

[Email Address]

[Phone Number]

[Date]

The Honorable Senator [Name of Senator]

[Room #] [Name] Senate Office Building

United States Senate

Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator [Name of Senator],

RE: The Brandon Act

Dear Senator [Name of Senator]:

I am writing to you regarding The Brandon Act. This Act was created in the memory of Brandon Caserta who died by suicide on June 25, 2018, on the flight line of his Naval command while stationed at Naval Air Station Norfolk, Virginia. Brandon’s Naval command refused to allow him, multiple times, from seeking help. There is documented proof that he was bullied, harassed, hazed, and retaliated against before and after trying to seek help. This constant harassment led Brandon to his decision to end his life – in front of his command and peers. Brandon left six notes to family and friends in which he attributed his suicide to persistent harassment, hazing, and bullying from some members and leaders of his Navy helicopter squadron.

The Brandon Act was created to be a safe phrase for service members to use which would require an immediate referral from the individual’s Chain of Command for a mental health evaluation following the disclosure of needing help. It would expand the existing law that would improve and regulate the process by which a member of the Armed Forces may be referred for a mental health evaluation. The Brandon Act would provide a confidential and safe channel for service members to self-report mental health issues. The process would protect the anonymity of service members, similar to the restricted reporting option that protects survivors of sexual assault.

I employ you to PLEASE do what you can! You, in your capacity, will make sure The Brandon Act gets the attention it deserves. As you have seen in the statistics, the suicide rate in the U.S. Armed Forces has become an epidemic. In 2018 a total of 326 Active-Duty and 217 Reservists died by suicide; in 2019, 348 Active-Duty and 155 Reservists died; in 2020, through the third quarter, 280 Active-Duty and 134 Reservists took their own lives. This epidemic must end. Again, I am asking you to support The Brandon Act - it will save lives.

Sincerely,

[Your signature]

[Your Name]