

**Senator Sullivan**  
**Statement for the Record**  
**Hearing on The American Legion's Legislative Presentation to Congress**  
**March 1, 2017**

Commander Schmidt, I'd like to thank you for your testimony this morning and to all American Legion members present for their service to our nation, especially those who have travelled all the way down from the great state of Alaska. You are all examples of what it means to serve and sacrifice and I am grateful and appreciative of all that you have done for this great country. You are heroes among us. I would like to welcome our colleagues from the House, and to the Chairmen and Ranking Members on both sides of the aisle, for their leadership in both committees.

This is my favorite time of year. When I see hallways lined with the men and women from our Veteran Service Organizations (VSO), it's awe-inspiring and deeply humbling. I made it a personal mission to be on the Veterans Affairs Committee when I came to the Senate back in 2015. In my mind, it's one of the most important, bipartisan committees in the Congress. I know if there is one issue we can all agree on, it's how we can uphold our nation's promises to our veterans. I currently serve in the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve, but beyond that, my state of Alaska boasts the largest number of veterans per capita, as well as thousands of active duty servicemembers and their families. It's important to me that their voices, and your voices, are heard here in Washington. When VSO's like the American Legion storm the Hill, those voices are amplified. It's a privilege to serve you and I thank you for coming to testify before us today.