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**Congress Approves Joshua Omgig Veterans Suicide Prevention Act:
*CrisisLink Providing Military Hotline Trainings Since 2005***

ARLINGTON, VA (September 27, 2007)—Both the House and Senate passed the Joshua Omgig Veterans Suicide Prevention Act on September 27, 2007. The Act directs the Secretary of Veteran's Affairs to develop and implement a comprehensive program designed to reduce the incidence of suicide among veterans.

Congress created the Act in response to the growing number of veterans returning from war with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and depression. The Act is designed to help veterans returning from combat and educate the public about PTSD and suicide. The Act was named after Joshua Omgig, a veteran who died by suicide in December 2005. Since his death, his family has been instrumental in promoting more awareness of PTSD and suicide prevention.

CrisisLink has been providing training for military hotlines since 2005. In partnership with Azalea Charities and with the support of Prince Leopold d'Arenberg of Belgium, CrisisLink is training Call Center Representatives for the 24/7 U.S. Army's Wounded Soldier and Family Hotline. The purpose of this hotline, which opened on March 19th, is two-fold: to offer wounded, injured, and ill soldiers and their family members a way to share concerns on the quality of patient care and access to benefits, and to provide senior Army leaders with information on problems concerning care and benefits so they can properly allocate resources to better serve soldiers and families.

This training is part of CrisisLink's outreach to military personnel and veterans to prevent suicide and other tragedies. CrisisLink has provided suicide prevention ASIST training for Walter Reed psychiatric nurses, as well as crisis hotline training for the Army's Info Line and the Army's Mortuary Affairs Hotline.

Research released in June by Dr. Mark S. Kaplan showed that male veterans are twice as likely to die by suicide as non-veterans, and that only 25% of veterans receive care through the Veterans Administration. Veterans account for 20% of all suicide fatalities nationwide, and with the impending potential tsunami of mental health concerns facing veterans returning from Iraq and Afghanistan, the need for targeted prevention education and intervention for military personnel and veterans is only increasing

CrisisLink saves lives and prevents tragedies every day by providing those facing life crises, trauma, and suicide with support, information, and links to community resources. Since 1969, CrisisLink has fielded over half a million calls, provided a quarter of a million referrals, and answered over 20,000 calls concerning suicide. CrisisLink provides youth and senior outreach programs; community training on mental health and suicide prevention; the first comprehensive postvention program in the region with immediate support and support groups for survivors of sudden and traumatic loss; and training for professionals and community members. www.crisislink.org

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