

The Missing Piece in the Veteran Suicide Debate that DC Refuses to Acknowledge

National Veteran Advocate Eric Donoho Challenges Washington's Silence on Moral Injury and Faith During National Suicide Awareness Week

INDIANAPOLIS, IN, UNITED STATES, September 6, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- As National Suicide Awareness Week begins, a critical voice and book is absent from the discussions in DC: Retired Sergeant [Eric Donoho](#), a US Army Paratrooper who served in the 3rd Battalion 509th Infantry Airborne Scout/Sniper platoon.



Eric Donoho

His new book, [Canyon of Hope: From Darkness to Dawn; Embracing the Light Within](#), addresses the often-overlooked issue of moral injury and the vital role faith plays in healing these invisible wounds.

“

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*Retired 4-star general,
Michael A. Garrett*

Despite significant backing from high-ranking and influential figures, Donoho is being systematically excluded from the national conversation — an omission that raises serious concerns given his extensive contributions as a leading national veteran advocate.

Over the past six years, Donoho has played a pivotal role in shaping veteran legislation at the highest levels of government. His advocacy has been instrumental in the passage of five major pieces of veterans legislation,

including the landmark 988 Suicide Hotline, which provides critical, immediate support to veterans in crisis, and the PACT Act, which expands healthcare and benefits for veterans exposed to toxic substances. Donoho's dedication to veteran welfare was recognized at the highest level when he was invited to the East Room of the White House for the signing of The PACT Act.

“We’ve spent well into a trillion dollars on veteran services since 9/11, yet according to the most recent National Veteran Suicide Prevention Annual Report, 17 veterans a day still take their own lives. We haven’t moved the needle,” says Donoho. “The reason is simple: we’re ignoring moral injury, a deep spiritual wound that many veterans carry home. Because a major component of this injury involves faith, it’s being completely shut out in the national conversation.”

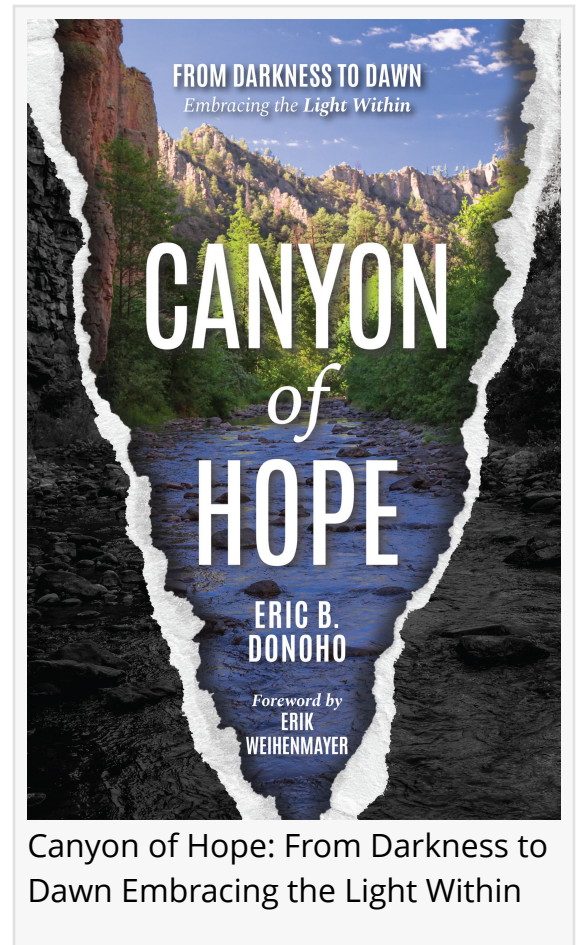
Research strongly supports Donoho’s position. Studies by the VA have shown that moral injury, especially when coupled with PTSD, is a significant predictor of suicide risk among veterans (VA.gov | Veterans Affairs, Oxford Academic). Yet, despite the evidence, faith-based approaches, that could address these issues, are consistently excluded from government and Veteran Service Organization (VSO) initiatives. According to the Heritage Foundation, over the past decade, the Department of Defense and VA have implemented more than 1,100 programs, but none have included faith-based interventions — a critical omission that has left the veteran suicide rate unchanged (The Heritage Foundation).

“I witnessed at least 85% of combat-oriented troops praying before loading up in Humvees and heading outside the wire on mission,” Donoho recalls. “But when we come home, faith isn’t part of the recovery process. Ignoring this leaves a moral wound to fester, pushing veterans into a dark hole where hope fades — and when they become hopeless that’s when suicides happen. Having a faith in something provides hope.”

Despite his significant contributions and achievements, Donoho is being sidelined. “I was a valuable resource until I wrote a book about how growing my faith helped me heal,” he notes. “After I wrote Canyon of Hope, I was ghosted.”

“I served as Eric’s U.S. Army brigade commander in Alaska and Iraq and am profoundly moved by his recounting of his years in uniform,” says retired 4-star general, Michael A. Garrett. “Eric is, and always will be, a Spartan warrior to the core and his story is a must-read for anyone who fears their challenges in life are insurmountable.”

With so many prominent figures supporting his book, Donoho’s absence from these critical discussions begs the question: What voices and perspectives are being missed in Washington this week, and at what cost to the veterans who need them most?



Canyon of Hope: From Darkness to Dawn Embracing the Light Within

About Eric Donoho

Eric is a shining example of resilience and purpose-driven living. With a background that spans military service, sales and marketing, construction management, real estate, and dedicated volunteer work, Eric's story is one of overcoming adversity while helping others do the same.

As a retired Sergeant in the US Army, Eric earned several honors, including the Purple Heart, two Army Commendation Medals, two Army Achievement Medals, the Good Conduct Medal, the National Defense Service Medal, the Operation Iraqi Freedom Campaign Medal with Star, the Global War on Terror Service Medal, the Valorous Unit Award, and the Combat Infantry Badge. After rebuilding his life with the support of independent veteran programs like No Barriers, Donoho founded his own company, [Hand Up LLC](#), and partnered with multiple Veteran Service Organizations to help pass 5 major pieces of veterans' legislation including the 988 Suicide Act and the PACT Act.

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