

Washington, D.C. –U.S. Reps. Tom Rooney (FL-16) and Ted Deutch (FL-19) today introduced legislation to enhance security at Department of Veterans Affairs medical centers by standardizing active shooter training for law enforcement personnel tasked with facility security.

“In recent years, from the terrorist attack on Fort Hood to the tragedy in Arizona, we have seen the violence and death that even a single gunman can unleash on unsuspecting, innocent victims,” Rooney said. “Medical facilities, which are ill-equipped to deal with an attack, are especially vulnerable, and VA hospitals are a prime target for violence since they are dedicated to the care of our men and women who have served overseas.

“Right now, there are no standardized programs to train VA security personnel to deal with an active shooter situation. This bill addresses that security gap by requiring law enforcement officers at VA medical centers to be trained in an active shooter situation to find the shooter, engage them, and end the shooting.”

“The recent shootings in Tuscon, Arizona and at Fort Hood have reminded us just how much pain a lone gunman can inflict, and we cannot leave our veterans undergoing treatment at VA hospitals and clinics vulnerable to such attacks,” said Congressman Deutch. “This bill ensures that security personnel in our VA medical centers are well-trained and well-equipped to respond to attacks against our nation’s servicemen and women.”

The Rooney bill directs the VA Secretary to develop policies to ensure that law enforcement officers at VA medical centers receive active shooter training consistent with the training programs established by civilian police agencies outside the centers. The legislation follows recommendations in the Department of Defense Document titled, “Protecting the Force: Lessons from Fort Hood.”

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