FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

New Report Highlights Heightened Risk of ALS in Military

Washington, D.C. (March 21, 2019) — People who have served in the military are at a greater risk of developing ALS and dying from the disease than those with no history of military service, according to research released today by The ALS Association.

The 2019 ALS in the Military report compiles findings from research conducted going back to the early 1990s when it was observed that ALS was occurring in Gulf War veterans at unexpected rates.

The data shows that ALS is connected to military service regardless of the branch of service or whether serving during peacetime or in war.

In 2008 the Department of Veterans Affairs established ALS as a service connected disease. Since then the average number of veterans living with ALS increased by 30 percent.

“Study after study has shown that our military heroes are more likely to develop ALS, which is why it is critical that Congress fully funds the ALS Research Program at the Department of Defense, as well as research at the National Institutes of Health,” said Calaneet Balas, president and CEO of The ALS Association.

“Research into the causes of and treatments for ALS can benefit veterans and nonveterans alike,” she added.

About ALS
ALS is a progressive neurodegenerative disease that affects nerve cells in the brain and spinal cord. Over the course of the disease, people lose the ability to move, to speak, and eventually, to breathe. On average, it takes about a year before a final ALS diagnosis is made. The disease is always fatal, usually within five years of diagnosis. There is no cure.

About The ALS Association
The ALS Association is the largest private funder of ALS research in the world. The Association funds global research collaborations, provides assistance for people with ALS and their families through our nationwide network of chapters and certified clinical care centers, and advocates for better public policies for people with ALS. The ALS Association builds hope and enhances quality of life while urgently searching for new treatments and a cure. For more information about The ALS Association, visit our website at www.alsa.org.