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## A key force in fighting Ebola

Reid Wilson's Oct. 27 Outlook essay, "The U.S. stopped Ebola once. We may never do it again," laid out cogent reasons the international spread of disease is so difficult to stop, especially when the country in which the disease occurs does not have a government that is trusted by its own population. But one omission stood out. Yes, the United States sent almost 3,000 soldiers to Liberia in 2014, but these troops were not sent there to fight Ebola. They were engineers, not medical personnel. These soldiers were sent to Monrovia to build a hospital in which officers of the U.S. Public Health Service treated Liberian health-care workers. These officers, members of the second-smallest of the seven federal uniformed services, put their lives at risk as they worked every day with Liberians who had come down with Ebola.

This uniformed corps of officers, which dates to 1889, was recognized for its bravery and competence by President Barack Obama, who awarded the entire PHS commissioned officer corps the Presidential Unit Citation. In addition, the Senate unanimously passed a resolution commending these officers for their work in fighting Ebola. The Commissioned Corps of the PHS consists of 6,300 men and women who are prepared to go anywhere, at any time, to fight disease and advance public health. Their efforts should be recognized, not forgotten.

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