**Example VA Buddy Letter for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)**

You’ll need to edit this letter and content for your specific situation.

**Note**: This is a fictional example for illustration purposes only.

**Part #1: Explain Your Relationship to the Veteran and How You Know Them**

My name is John Doe, and I served alongside veteran [INSERT VETERAN’S NAME] in the United States Army during our deployment to Iraq from January 2005 to December 2005.
We were both assigned to [INSERT UNIT] and worked closely together on a daily basis in [INSERT SPECIFIC DUTY].

I am writing this statement on behalf of [VETERAN’S NAME] to describe the traumatic events we experienced together in Iraq and how those experiences have negatively impacted him over the years.

Having served side by side, I had the unique opportunity to witness firsthand the challenges he faced during service and the lingering effects of those experiences on his mental health.

**Part #2: What You Directly Witnessed or Are Witnessing**

During our deployment, [VETERAN’S NAME] and I were frequently subjected to rocket and mortar attacks at our base in [INSERT LOCATION].

I vividly remember one particular night in April 2005 when our base came under heavy fire. Rockets and mortars exploded nearby, shaking the ground and forcing us to take cover in bunkers for hours.

I saw the fear and stress on [VETERAN’S NAME]’s face as we waited, unsure if the next explosion would hit us directly. This was not an isolated incident—rocket and mortar attacks happened weekly, sometimes daily, throughout our deployment.

I also recall [VETERAN’S NAME] struggling to sleep at night, often startled awake by loud noises or nightmares. He would sit quietly, visibly shaken, and sometimes mentioned feeling “on edge” or unable to relax.

After returning home, I noticed significant changes in [VETERAN’S NAME]’s behavior. He avoided social gatherings and became irritable in loud or crowded environments. During a reunion in 2010, he confided in me about persistent nightmares involving the rocket and mortar attacks, as well as frequent flashbacks triggered by loud noises like fireworks or construction sounds.

**Part #3: List and Explain the Veteran’s Current Severity of Symptoms**

Over the years, I’ve seen [VETERAN’S NAME] struggle with symptoms that I believe are directly linked to the traumatic events we experienced in Iraq.

He frequently mentions having trouble sleeping due to recurring nightmares about the attacks, which leave him exhausted, irritable, and unable to focus during the day. His sleep disturbances often lead to severe fatigue and increased agitation, impacting his ability to perform basic daily tasks.

He also experiences episodes of severe anxiety and panic attacks, especially in situations where he feels confined or when he hears sudden loud noises. For example, during a Fourth of July celebration in 2018, he had to leave abruptly because the sound of fireworks caused him to panic, reliving the terror of the mortar attacks. These events trigger flashbacks that completely disconnect him from the present, leaving him visibly shaken and emotionally distraught.

[INSERT VETERAN’S NAME] has also expressed persistent difficulty maintaining close relationships, including feelings of detachment and estrangement from loved ones. He avoids situations that remind him of the deployment and often isolates himself from family and friends. He has mentioned feeling emotionally numb and has struggled to connect with his spouse and children.

In addition, I’ve observed instances of hypervigilance, where he is constantly scanning for threats, even in safe environments. This hyper-awareness causes extreme irritability, outbursts of anger, and an inability to relax or enjoy everyday activities. He also suffers from impaired memory and concentration, often forgetting important tasks or conversations, which has made it difficult for him to hold steady employment.

More concerning, [VETERAN’S NAME] has expressed feelings of hopelessness and has admitted to experiencing suicidal thoughts during particularly dark periods. His depression and emotional instability have significantly affected his ability to find purpose and meaning in life.

It is my firm belief that these severe symptoms, including flashbacks, panic attacks, insomnia, hypervigilance, emotional detachment, and suicidal ideation, are the result of the trauma he endured during our deployment. He was a dedicated and strong soldier, but these experiences have left deep and lasting scars on his mental health, impacting every aspect of his life.

**Part #4: Certify, Sign, and Date**

I CERTIFY THAT the statements on this form are true and accurate to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Please feel free to contact me at the email address or phone number listed below if additional information or clarification is needed.

Signed,
John Doe
[DATE]
[EMAIL ADDRESS]
[PHONE NUMBER]