

JAN 23 2014

A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

1 SECTION 1. Women have served honorably and courageously in
2 all of America's wars and conflicts since the American
3 Revolution. With nearly fifteen per cent of the United States
4 Armed Forces consisting of women, the population of female
5 veterans is increasing exponentially and is projected to exceed
6 ten per cent of the total veteran population by the year 2020.
7 More than eleven thousand female veterans reside in Hawaii
8 alone.

9 The circumstances and challenges faced by female veterans,
10 as well as women on active duty, are often different from those
11 of their male counterparts. Despite this, veteran's benefits
12 have traditionally been designed to address the needs of male
13 veterans.

14 Recognizing that a growing need to improve veterans'
15 services to address the specific needs of female veterans in
16 such areas as medical and mental health care, child care
17 services, housing, and financial assistance existed, Senate
18 Resolution No. 6, Senate Draft 1, was adopted in 2012, urging



1 the United States Department of Veterans Affairs and the Hawaii
2 office of veterans services to develop comprehensive programs
3 and services to address the needs of female veterans and women
4 on active duty. In response to Senate Resolution No. 6, Senate
5 Draft 1, the Hawaii office of veterans services established the
6 Hawaii military women's task force with the mission "to improve
7 the lives of women who are serving or have served in the
8 military, to identify and address the unique needs of women
9 veterans, and to harness the power of women, influencing
10 change."

11 In 2013, after numerous meetings, the task force submitted
12 a report to the legislature which concluded that military women
13 face multiple inter-related complex problems, including a high
14 rate of military sexual trauma, and for female veterans, the
15 related re-entry issues of adequate health care, high rates of
16 post-traumatic stress disorder, homelessness, and joblessness.

17 One recommendation of the task force to help address the
18 various problems and needs of female veterans and women on
19 active duty is to establish and fully fund a women's veterans
20 coordinator within the office of veterans services.



1 The purpose of this Act is to appropriate funds to
2 establish a full-time, permanent women's veterans coordinator
3 position in the office of veterans services.

4 SECTION 2. There is appropriated out of the general
5 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so much
6 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2014-2015 for the
7 establishment of one full-time equivalent (1.00 FTE) permanent
8 women's veterans coordinator position in the office of veterans
9 services to address the various problems and needs of female
10 veterans and women on active duty.

11 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of
12 defense for the purposes of this Act.

13 SECTION 3. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2014.
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INTRODUCED BY:

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S.B. NO. 3045

Report Title:

Office of Veterans Services; Women's Veterans Coordinator;
Appropriation; Establishment of Position

Description:

Establishes a Women's Veterans Coordinator position within the
Office of Veterans Services. Appropriation. Effective July 1,
2014.

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