
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE.

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

1 PART I

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

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

15 In recognition of a growing need to improve veterans'
16 services to address the specific needs of female veterans in
17 such areas as medical and mental health care, child care
18 services, housing, and financial assistance, Senate Resolution



1 No. 6, S.D. 1 (2012) urged the United States Department of
2 Veterans Affairs and the Hawaii office of veterans' services to
3 develop comprehensive programs and services to address the needs
4 of female veterans and women on active duty. In response to
5 Senate Resolution No. 6, S.D. 1, the Hawaii office of veterans'
6 services established the Hawaii women military veterans task
7 force with the mission "to improve the lives of women veterans
8 who are serving or who have served in the military, to identify
9 and address the unique needs of women veterans, and to harness
10 the power of women to influence change."

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

17 Furthermore, with the recent Department of Defense
18 announcement to allow women in all front-line combat jobs,
19 including infantry, artillery, armor, and special operations
20 units, even more program emphasis will be needed when these
21 military women eventually leave the service and become veterans.



1 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2016-2017 for
2 military and veterans commemoration events.

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

5 PART III

6 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2076.



Report Title:

Office of Veterans' Services; Veterans Services Counselor IV;
Appropriation

Description:

Appropriates funds for the establishment of a veterans services counselor IV position within the Office of Veterans' Services to assist all veterans, with a primary focus on female veterans. Appropriates funds for military and veterans commemoration events. Effective 7/1/2076. (SD1)

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