

Legislation Text

File #: 170929, **Version:** 0

Recognizing the Service of Women Veterans in the United States of America and the Extraordinary Contributions of the Women Veterans Center.

WHEREAS, Women have been actively serving in the U.S. military since the Revolutionary War, oftentimes disguised as men so they could serve in combat roles. The Women's Armed Services Integration Act of 1948 allowed women to serve permanently in the military, rather than only during times of war; and

WHEREAS, In 1974, women were admitted to the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy in Kings Point. In 1976, women were first admitted to the remaining service academies, including U.S. Military Academy in West Point, U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis, U.S. Coast Guard Academy in New London, and the U.S. Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs; and

WHEREAS, The U.S.S. *Acadia* departed for the Persian Gulf in 1990 with both men and women aboard for the first time ever in wartime. More than 41,000 women were deployed to war zones between 1991 and 1992 during the Persian Gulf War; and

WHEREAS, In 1998 female fighter pilots flew combat missions for the first time ever. Captain Kathleen McGrath became the first woman to command a U.S. Navy warship in 2000. In 2004, Colonel Linda McTague became the first female commander of a fighter squadron in the U.S. Air Force. In 2011, women deployed on a submarine for the first time; and

WHEREAS, Obama Administration Defense Secretary Leon Panetta announced in 2013 that the ban on women serving in combat would be lifted. In 2015, during the first year that women were permitted in ground, Captain Kristen Griest and First Lieutenant Shaye Haver became the first two women to graduate from Army Ranger School, shifting the paradigm "If women could meet the standard" to "Now that women have met the standard"; and

WHEREAS, The military, influenced by the performance of women on the front lines since 9/11 and by these first women Ranger School graduates, is setting the stage for women to command young men "outside the wire" in infantry and armor platoons, with the same risks and responsibilities as their male counterparts; and

WHEREAS, As they transition out of the military, women now make up 10 percent of the veteran population. Women veterans, and their accomplishments in service, often go unrecognized, even though the number of women in the military continues to grow and women continue to break barriers during and after their military service; and

WHEREAS, The transition from military life to civilian life can be difficult. More than four-in-ten female post-9/11 veterans say their readjustment to civilian life after their military service was very or somewhat difficult; and

WHEREAS, The Veterans Multi-Service Center created the Women Veterans Center in 2014 to address the

growing and unique needs of women veterans and their families. Through its' mission of "providing a separate and communal space to heal, grow and thrive" to date, the WVC has served over 650 women and their families; and

WHEREAS, The Women Veterans Center is focused on creating community, and strengthening one-on-one relationships through a variety of services including; assistance with immediate needs (meals, clothing, toiletry products) housing case management, benefits counseling, referrals to community partners, and a robust calendar of fellowship activities; and

WHEREAS, Women of America's military, past and present, have served their nation in times of peace and war, at great personal sacrifice for both themselves and their families. Women have consistently answered the call without hesitation to defend our democracy and freedom, playing a significant role in developing the extraordinarily capable military that continues to protect the foundation of our great nation; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That we hereby recognize the service of women veterans in the United States and the extraordinary contributions of the Women Veterans Center.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That an Engrossed copy of this resolution be presented to the Women Veterans Center as evidence of the sincere sentiments of this legislative body.