

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

SENATE RESOLUTION

No. 46

Session of 2023

INTRODUCED BY PENNYCUICK, FARRY, BOSCOLA, HUGHES, HUTCHINSON, CAPPELLETTI, COLLETT, SCHWANK, BARTOLOTTA, ROBINSON, BAKER, COSTA, MUTH, PHILLIPS-HILL, J. WARD, MASTRIANO, BROWN AND COMITTA, FEBRUARY 24, 2023

SENATOR MASTRIANO, VETERANS AFFAIRS AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS, AS AMENDED, JUNE 19, 2023

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

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1 Directing the Joint State Government Commission to establish the
2 Task Force on Women Veterans' Health Care.

3 WHEREAS, According to the United States Department of
4 Veterans Affairs, the projected veteran population nationwide is
5 18,500,000, with women making up an estimated 11% of that
6 population; and

7 WHEREAS, The United States Census Bureau estimates that the
8 percentage of female veterans ~~between 2010 and 2040~~ will
9 increase ~~from 9% in 2010~~ to MORE THAN 17% in 2040; and

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<--

10 WHEREAS, According to the United States Department of
11 Veterans Affairs, as of September 2022, this Commonwealth was
12 home to approximately 720,000 veterans, including 615,000
13 wartime veterans from World War II through the PERSIAN Gulf War;
14 and

<--

15 WHEREAS, Females comprise ~~approximately 60,000 of the wartime~~
16 ~~veterans~~ MORE THAN 63,000 OF THE WARTIME VETERANS IN THIS

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<--

1 COMMONWEALTH; and

2 WHEREAS, The number of women veterans will increase with the
3 end of Operation Iraqi Freedom, Operation Enduring Freedom and
4 the removal of the United States Armed Forces personnel from
5 Afghanistan; and

6 WHEREAS, Women veterans often face unique challenges in
7 transitioning from active duty to civilian life; and

8 WHEREAS, The challenging needs facing women veterans can
9 often be overlooked when providing services to a large veteran
10 population; and

11 ~~WHEREAS, Ensuring the availability of specialized services~~ <--
12 ~~for physical health, such as obstetrics and gynecological care,~~
13 ~~cancer screenings, family planning and infertility treatments,~~
14 ~~as well as mental health, including, but not limited to,~~
15 ~~treatment of post traumatic stress disorder, traumatic brain~~
16 ~~injury, military sexual trauma and alcohol and substance abuse,~~
17 ~~tailored to the specific needs of women veterans is essential to~~
18 ~~ensure that our returning women veterans receive proper and~~
19 ~~adequate care; and~~

20 WHEREAS, ENSURING THE AVAILABILITY OF SPECIALIZED SERVICES <--
21 FOR PHYSICAL HEALTH AS WELL AS MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES, TAILORED
22 TO THE SPECIFIC NEEDS OF WOMEN VETERANS, IS ESSENTIAL TO ENSURE
23 THAT RETURNING WOMEN VETERANS RECEIVE PROPER AND ADEQUATE CARE;
24 AND

25 WHEREAS, SPECIALIZED SERVICES FOR PHYSICAL HEALTH MAY
26 INCLUDE:

- 27 (1) OBSTETRICS AND GYNECOLOGICAL CARE;
28 (2) CANCER SCREENINGS;
29 (3) FAMILY PLANNING;
30 (4) INFERTILITY TREATMENTS;

- 1 (5) PREGNANCY CARE;
- 2 (6) MISCARRIAGE COUNSELING AND CARE;
- 3 (7) REPRODUCTIVE CARE;
- 4 (8) AGING AND GERIATRIC CARE;
- 5 (9) PAIN MANAGEMENT; AND
- 6 (10) TREATMENT OF EATING DISORDERS, MENOPAUSE, URINARY
- 7 INCONTINENCE, HEART DISEASE, DIABETES AND MUSCULOSKELETAL
- 8 INJURIES;

9 AND

10 WHEREAS, MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES MAY INCLUDE TREATMENT OF
11 POSTTRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER, TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY, MILITARY
12 SEXUAL TRAUMA AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE; AND

13 WHEREAS, Establishing a task force to study the issues facing
14 women veterans and to make recommendations to the Governor and
15 the General Assembly will provide much-needed information and
16 insight from those who address the issues on a daily basis;
17 therefore be it

18 RESOLVED ~~(the House of Representatives concurring), That the~~ <--
19 ~~General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania,~~ THAT THE <--
20 SENATE OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA direct the Joint
21 State Government Commission to establish the Task Force on Women
22 Veterans' Health Care; and be it further

23 RESOLVED, That the Task Force on Women Veterans' Health Care
24 consist of the chair of the State Veterans' Commission ~~and~~ <--
25 ~~representatives from~~ OR A DESIGNATED REPRESENTATIVE AND: <--

26 (1) ~~the~~ A health care provider ~~community~~ in this <--
27 Commonwealth that has experience in providing health care to
28 returning women veterans;

29 (2) A HEALTH CARE PROVIDER IN THIS COMMONWEALTH THAT HAS <--
30 EXPERIENCE SERVING AS A MEDICAL OFFICER AND IS A VETERAN OF

1 THE ARMED SERVICES ADVOCATING FOR ACCESS TO WOMEN'S HEALTH
2 CARE IN THE LIFE SCIENCES INDUSTRY;

3 ~~(2) the~~ (3) A mental health care provider ~~community of~~ <--
4 IN this Commonwealth that has experience in providing mental <--
5 health care treatment to returning women veterans;

6 ~~(3) the~~ (4) A substance abuse and addiction treatment <--
7 provider ~~community of~~ IN this Commonwealth that has <--
8 experience in providing substance abuse and addiction
9 treatment to returning women veterans;

10 ~~(4) a~~ (5) AN INDIVIDUAL FROM A Commonwealth advocacy <--
11 group that represents the interests of sexual assault victims
12 with experience in providing services to women veterans who
13 have suffered military sexual trauma, including harassment or
14 abuse; and <--

15 ~~(5) a~~ (6) A JUDGE THAT SERVES ON A county veteran's <--
16 court; AND <--

17 (7) AN INDIVIDUAL FROM TRANSITIONING PROGRAMS, INCLUDING
18 EMPLOYMENT, HOUSING, CHILD CARE, FINANCIAL PLANNING AND PEER-
19 TO-PEER SUPPORT, FOR RETURNING WOMEN VETERANS;

20 and be it further

21 RESOLVED, That the Task Force on Women Veterans' Health Care
22 study the health care needs of women veterans, including, but
23 not limited to:

24 (1) quality of and access to mental health services,
25 including services and treatment for post-traumatic stress
26 disorder, traumatic brain injury and military sexual trauma;

27 (2) in-patient treatment availability;

28 (3) adequacy and availability of appropriate women
29 veterans' health care within the Federal Veterans Affairs
30 health care system and this Commonwealth, as well as the

1 interaction and recognition of the needs of women veterans by
2 private health care providers; and

3 (4) adequacy, quality of and access to services
4 providing for the identification and treatment of military
5 sexual trauma, including sexual harassment or abuse;

6 and be it further

7 RESOLVED, That the Task Force on Women Veterans' Health Care
8 identify other needs relating to the provision of women
9 veterans' health care services; and be it further

10 RESOLVED, That the Task Force on Women Veterans' Health Care,
11 with the assistance of the Joint State Government Commission,
12 consult with Federal, State and local entities, including, but
13 not limited to:

14 (1) The Pennsylvania Congressional Delegation.

15 (2) The United States Department of Veterans Affairs.

16 (3) The County Commissioners Association of
17 Pennsylvania.

18 (4) The Pennsylvania Municipal League.

19 (5) The Pennsylvania Medical Society.

20 (6) The Hospital and Healthsystem Association of
21 Pennsylvania.

22 (7) Veterans organizations or other organizations or
23 associations that advocate for women veterans.

24 (8) Any individual the task force identifies as having
25 relevant, salient and timely experience within the Veterans
26 Affairs health care system for women in Pennsylvania;

27 and be it further

28 RESOLVED, That the Joint State Government Commission:

29 (1) Accept and review written comments from individuals
30 and organizations.

1 (2) Report findings and recommendations within 18 months
2 from the adoption of this resolution, to the Governor, the
3 Senate and the House of Representatives.

4 (3) Include in the report under paragraph (2)
5 recommendations to:

6 (i) improve the delivery of health care services,
7 including preventative, maintenance and acute care, as
8 well as mental health services to women veterans; and

9 (ii) recommend necessary changes in State statutes
10 and practices, policies and procedures relating to the
11 delivery of health care and mental health services to
12 women veterans;

13 and be it further

14 RESOLVED, That a copy of the report required under this
15 resolution be transmitted to ~~the President of the United States,~~ <--
16 the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, ~~the presiding officers of~~ <--
17 ~~each house of Congress~~ and to each member of Congress from
18 Pennsylvania.