



Office of the City Clerk

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Legislation Text

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RESOLUTION IN HONOR OF WOMEN VETERANS

WHEREAS, in the history of our great nation, beginning with the American Revolution, women have served in the military with honor and distinction, increasingly performing duties once restricted to men only, especially in our current wars against terrorism in Operation Iraqi Freedom, Operation Enduring Freedom, and Operation New Dawn (OIF/OEF/OND), in which less than 1% of the total U.S. population has served; and,

WHEREAS, women currently make-up 8% (1.8 million) of all U.S. veterans (22.2 million), compared to 4% in 1990, many having served during OIF/OEF/OND-a much higher percentage than those having served in previous wars, with approximately 3% residing in the State of Illinois; and,

WHEREAS, because the historical default picture of a veteran recently returned from active duty is that of a young male, the post-deployment transition for women veterans poses challenges and difficulties unique to their sex, especially for those having served within this last decade; and

WHEREAS, the incidence of unemployment for veterans is lower at 6.7% than that of the national average of 7.8% (8.8% in Illinois), that of veterans of OIF/OEF/OND overall is higher at 9.7%, but for women veterans it is higher still at 15.5%; and,

WHEREAS, the national home foreclosure crisis also affected our military personnel, often making post-deployment transition more stressful; and,

WHEREAS, veterans make up 11% of the adult population but are 23% of the homeless population, women veterans account for 7% and have a risk of becoming homeless four times greater than for male veterans and often have children with them, yet most facilities are designed or approved only for male veterans; and,

WHEREAS, many veterans of OIF/OEF/OND are experiencing post-traumatic stress (PTS), including women veterans; and,

WHEREAS, it is estimated that 50% of recent women veterans experienced some form of military sexual trauma (MST), most of which has gone unreported given they often were the sole female in their troop and thus wanted to avoid further isolation; and

WHEREAS, women veterans often do not self-identify as veterans and this keeps them from taking full advantage of veterans benefits and resources; now, therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, That we, the Mayor and the Members of the City Council of Chicago, assembled this eighth day of November, 2012, do hereby request that the City Council Committee on Human Relations hold a hearing on the difficulties faced by women veterans; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That we ask that the Committee invite representatives of the Veterans Advisory Council, Veterans Resource Office, Veterans Employment Center, the Chicago Housing Authority, the Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs, and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, so that we may learn more about the programs available to women veterans and determine how best to provide wrap-around services in concert, and thereby fully honor the sacrifice of our women veterans. . . .;

James A. Balcer Alderman, 11th Ward