
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, veterans' benefits
12 have traditionally been designed to address the needs of male
13 veterans.

14 In recognition of 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, S.R. No. 6, S.D. 1,



1 was adopted in 2012, urging 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 S.R. No. 6, S.D. 1, the Hawaii office of veterans' services
6 established the Hawaii women military veterans task force with
7 the mission "to improve the lives of women veterans who are
8 serving or who have served in the military, to identify and
9 address the unique needs of women veterans, and to harness the
10 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 One recommendation of the task force to help address the
18 various problems and needs of veterans is to establish and fully
19 fund a veterans coordinator position within the office of
20 veterans' services to assist all veterans, with a primary focus
21 on female veterans, who served on active duty for the full
22 period during which they were activated.



1 The purpose of this Act is to appropriate funds to
2 establish a full-time, permanent veterans coordinator position
3 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
6 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2015-2016 and
7 the same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal
8 year 2016-2017 for the establishment of one full-time equivalent
9 (1.00 FTE) permanent veterans coordinator position in the office
10 of veterans' services to address the various problems and needs
11 of all veterans, with a primary focus on female veterans, who
12 served on active duty for the full period they were activated.

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

15 SECTION 3. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2015.

16

INTRODUCED BY:

[Handwritten signatures and scribbles over the text]

H.B. NO. 881

Report Title:

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

Description:

Establishes a veterans coordinator position within the Office of Veterans' Services to assist all veterans, with a primary focus on female veterans, who served on active duty for the full period they were activated. Makes an appropriation.

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