



GOV. MSG. NO. 1311

EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS
HONOLULU

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR

July 5, 2016

The Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi,
President
and Members of the Senate
Twenty-Eighth State Legislature
State Capitol, Room 409
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

The Honorable Joseph M. Souki,
Speaker and Members of the
House of Representatives
Twenty-Eighth State Legislature
State Capitol, Room 431
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Dear President Kouchi, Speaker Souki, and Members of the Legislature:

This is to inform you that on July 5, 2016, the following bill was signed into law:

HB2489 SD1 CD1

RELATING TO THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
ACT 209 (16)

Sincerely,

DAVID Y. IGE
Governor, State of Hawai'i

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 thirteen 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, 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 The legislature finds that one way to help address the
2 various problems and needs of veterans is to establish and fully
3 fund a veterans services counselor IV position within the office
4 of veterans' services to assist all veterans, with a primary
5 focus on female veterans who served on active duty.

6 The purpose of this Act is to appropriate funds for:

- 7 (1) The establishment of one full-time permanent veterans
8 services counselor IV position in the office of
9 veterans' services; and
- 10 (2) The Vietnam veterans fiftieth anniversary
11 commemoration.

12 SECTION 2. There is appropriated out of the general
13 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$50,772 or so much
14 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2016-2017 for the
15 establishment of one full-time equivalent (1.00 FTE) permanent
16 veterans services counselor IV position in the office of
17 veterans' services to address the various problems and needs of
18 all veterans, with a primary focus on female veterans, who
19 served on active duty for the full period they were activated.

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



1 SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general
2 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$200,000 or so much
3 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2016-2017 for the
4 Vietnam veterans fiftieth anniversary commemoration.

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

7 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2016.

APPROVED this 5 day of JUL, 2016



GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF HAWAII

