

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO.122

Reps. Tate, Calley, Clemente, Crawford, Garza, Hope, Love, Sabo, Sneller, Sowerby, Stone, Wittenberg and Witwer offered the following resolution:

1 A resolution to declare June 12, 2019, as Women Veterans
2 Recognition Day in the state of Michigan.

3 Whereas, Women have proudly served their country throughout
4 all periods of the history of the United States, whether disguised
5 as male soldiers during the American Revolution and Civil War, as
6 nurses in World War I, or as combat helicopter pilots in
7 Afghanistan; and

8 Whereas, Women have formally been a part of the United States
9 Armed Forces since the inception of the Army Nurse Corps in 1901,
10 but have informally served since the inception of our nation's
11 military; and



1 Whereas, During the American Revolution, women served on the
2 battlefield alongside the men, mainly as nurses, water bearers,
3 often called "Molly Pitchers," cooks, laundresses, and saboteurs.
4 Despite Army regulations that only men could enlist, women who
5 wanted to join in the fighting circumvented the rules by
6 masquerading as young men or boys; and

7 Whereas, In 1917, the Navy announced it would open enlistment
8 to women. About 12,000 female yeomen entered the Navy and filled a
9 variety of jobs, including draftsmen, interpreters, couriers, and
10 translators; and

11 Whereas, Three hundred seven women enlisted in the Marine
12 Corps during World War I. Like their sisters in the Navy, they were
13 limited to the enlisted ranks and worked mainly in Washington,
14 D.C., doing various administrative jobs. Women's service
15 contributions in World War I showed that they either had, or could
16 quickly learn, nontraditional skills needed by the military; and

17 Whereas, Following Pearl Harbor, Congress authorized new
18 women's components for each of the services and increased the
19 number of active duty positions in the Army and Navy Nurse Corps.
20 In May 1942, the Army was given the authority to establish the
21 Women's Army Auxiliary Corps, also known as the WAACs. The Navy,
22 Coast Guard, and Marine Corps followed suit, but rather than making
23 women an auxiliary component, they opted to enroll them in the
24 reserves on the same basis as their male counterparts, while the
25 Army Air Forces enlisted nearly 1,100 female civilian volunteers
26 who earned their silver wings as Women Airforce Service Pilots
27 (WASP); and

28 Whereas, At the end of World War II in 1945, of the
29 approximately 12 million people remaining in the Armed Forces,

1 about 280,000 were women; and

2 Whereas, With the passage of the Women's Armed Services
3 Integration Act of 1948, women became a permanent part of the
4 United States military, but women continued to be restricted to 2
5 percent of the military population. That restriction was finally
6 lifted in 1967 with the amendment of the Women's Armed Services
7 Integration Act, which also opened senior officer ranks to women;
8 and

9 Whereas, The early 1990s were a historic time for women in the
10 military with over 40,000 women deploying in support of the Persian
11 Gulf War, making women service members more visible in the eyes of
12 the public. In addition, the Defense Authorization Act in 1992
13 repealed combat exclusion laws that had prevented women from flying
14 combat aircrafts; and

15 Whereas, Women who have served in the United States military
16 are often referred to as "invisible veterans" because their service
17 contributions, until the 1970s, went largely unrecognized by
18 politicians, the media, academia, and the general public; and

19 Whereas, Even though women have been officially serving in the
20 military since the creation of the Army Nurse Corps in 1901, they
21 have not always been considered qualified for veteran status for
22 the purpose of receiving benefits from the Department of Veterans
23 Affairs. Even after women were granted veteran status, issues of
24 access, exclusion, and improper management of their health care
25 still remained; and

26 Whereas, It was not until well after World War II that women
27 who served in the military began to officially be recognized as
28 veterans; and

29 Whereas, In the late 1970s and early 1980s, many of the

1 contributions made by women in World War II were formally
2 recognized through laws that granted these women with veteran
3 status for their time in service. This opened the doors for women
4 to take advantage of programs, opportunities, and benefits from the
5 federal and state governments, the Department of Veterans Affairs,
6 and other veteran service organizations; and

7 Whereas, The 1980 decennial census marked the first time that
8 information on women veterans was ever captured in a large national
9 survey. At the time of the 1980 decennial census, women made up
10 just over 2 percent of the veteran population. Today, that
11 proportion has increased to almost 8 percent; and

12 Whereas, Over the past 20 years, the Veterans Health
13 Administration (VHA) has introduced initiatives designed to improve
14 health care access and quality of care for women veterans; and

15 Whereas, In 2008, VHA's Women Veterans Health Strategic Health
16 Care Group began a five-year plan to redesign the nation's health
17 care delivery system for women. A fundamental component of this
18 plan was to ensure that all women veterans had access to
19 comprehensive primary care from skilled women's health providers;
20 and

21 Whereas, There are currently over 2 million women veterans
22 living in the United States and Puerto Rico. Of this number, nearly
23 44,000 make Michigan their home; now, therefore, be it

24 Resolved by the House of Representatives, That the members of
25 this legislative body declare June 12, 2019, as Women Veterans
26 Recognition Day in the state of Michigan. We urge all Michiganders
27 to honor women veterans on this momentous occasion.