

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 312

Reps. Rogers, Sabo, Steckloff, Shannon, Morse, Puri, Camilleri, Tate, Martin, LaFave, Roth, Allor, Mueller, Bezotte, Slagh, O'Neal, Bolden, Kupp, Koleszar, Manoogian, Glanville, Witwer, Garza, LaGrand, Ellison, Hertel, Cavanagh, Stone, Sneller, Neeley, Scott, Haadsma, Brabec, Jones, Peterson, Tyrone Carter, Coleman, Anthony, Sowerby, Rabhi, Pohutsky and Cherry offered the following resolution:

1 A resolution to declare June 12, 2022, 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

1 Whereas, Women have formally been a part of the United States
2 Armed Forces since the inception of the Army Nurse Corps in 1901,
3 but have informally served since the inception of our nation's
4 military; and

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

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

15 Whereas, During World War I, 307 women enlisted in the Marine
16 Corps. Like their sisters in the Navy, they were limited to the
17 enlisted ranks and worked mainly in Washington, D.C. doing various
18 administrative jobs. Women's service contributions in World War I
19 showed that they either had or could quickly learn nontraditional
20 skills needed by the military; and

21 Whereas, Following Pearl Harbor, Congress authorized new
22 components for women's services that increased the number of active
23 duty positions in the Army and Navy Nurse Corps. In May 1942, the
24 Army was given the authority to establish the Women's Army
25 Auxiliary Corps (WAAC). The Navy, Coast Guard, and Marine Corps
26 followed suit, but rather than making women an auxiliary component,
27 they opted to enroll them in the reserves on the same basis as
28 their male counterparts, while the Army Air Forces enlisted nearly
29 1,100 female civilian volunteers who earned their silver wings as

1 Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASP); and

2 Whereas, At the end of World War II in 1945, of the
3 approximately 12 million people remaining in the Armed Forces,
4 about 280,000 were women; and

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

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

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

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

29 Whereas, It was not until well after World War II that women

1 who served in the military began to officially be recognized as
2 veterans; and

3 Whereas, In the late 1970s and early 1980s, many of the
4 contributions made by women in World War II were formally
5 recognized through laws granting these women official veteran
6 status for their service. This opened the doors for women to take
7 advantage of programs, opportunities, and benefits from the federal
8 and state governments, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and
9 other veteran service organizations; and

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

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

19 Whereas, Originally, the 1980 decennial census marked the
20 first time that information on women veterans was ever captured in
21 a large national survey. At the time of the 1980 decennial census,
22 women made up just over two percent of the veteran population.

23 Today, that proportion has increased to almost eight percent; and

24 Whereas, There are currently over two million women veterans
25 living in the United States and Puerto Rico. Of this number, nearly
26 44,000 make Michigan their home; now, therefore, be it

27 Resolved by the House of Representatives, That members of this
28 legislative body declare June 12, 2022 as Women Veterans
29 Recognition Day in the state of Michigan; and be it further

1 Resolved, That we urge all Michiganders to honor women
2 veterans on this momentous occasion.