



Legislation Text

File #: Res 0954-2011, **Version:** *

Res. No. 954

Resolution calling on the United States Congress and the United States Department of Defense to amend the current policy and allow women to serve in active combat positions in all branches of the United States military.

By Council Members Dromm, Brewer, Chin, Ferreras, James, Lander, Mark-Viverito and Rodriguez

Whereas, There are currently 213,823 active-duty servicewomen in the United States Armed Forces; and

Whereas, According to the Department of Defense's Direct Ground Combat Assignment Policy, "military women can be assigned to all positions for which they are qualified, except that women shall be excluded from assignments to units below the brigade level whose primary mission is to engage in direct combat on the ground;" and

Whereas, In 2008, through a provision in the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2009, Congress established the Military Leadership Diversity Commission ("Commission"), whose goals were to evaluate and assess "policies that provide opportunities for the promotion and advancement of minority members of the Armed Forces" and to submit a report to Congress and the President that would include recommendations for improving diversity within the military; and

Whereas, In January 2011, the Commission recommended that the policy banning women from serving in combat positions in the military be lifted; and

Whereas, In many ways, the policy is already ignored since the demand for combat troops in Afghanistan and Iraq has compelled military personnel to circumvent this policy through a loophole allowing women to serve in combat positions if attached, rather than assigned, to a combat unit; and

Whereas, Female soldiers make up approximately 11 percent of the troops currently deployed in Afghanistan and Iraq; and

Whereas, In light of the important role that combat experience plays in promotion within the military, denying combat roles to female military personnel puts them at an unfair disadvantage for career advancement; and

Whereas, Despite accounting for over 14 percent of the total active force, women only account for about six percent of senior military personnel; and

Whereas, Exclusion from combat also had a disparate impact on female veterans who, until July 2010, had difficulty accessing treatment for post-traumatic stress disorder from the United States Department of Veterans Affairs without a combat decoration; and

Whereas, According to a March 2011 Washington Post-ABC News poll, nearly three-quarters of Americans support allowing women to serve in combat units in the United States military; and

Whereas, It is a gross injustice to expect women to put themselves in harm's way while our government still denies them full equality in the military; and

Whereas, Asking women to put themselves in harm's way while still denying them full equality in the military presents a gross injustice; and

Whereas, Lifting a ban on women serving in combat positions in the military requires congressional action; and

Whereas, To date, there is no pending legislation that would, if passed, shatter this glass ceiling in the military; and

Whereas, In the interest of producing the most talented, capable and representative military force possible, it is imperative that women be given the opportunity to serve in combat positions in the Armed Forces; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls on the United States Congress and the United States Department of Defense to amend current policy and allow women to serve in active combat positions in all branches of the United States military.

DMB
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