



## CITY OF BOSTON IN CITY COUNCIL

### RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING WOMEN VETERANS DURING WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

**WHEREAS:** Women currently comprise nearly 20% of serving military personnel and 10% of the veteran population. However, many women veterans do not receive proper recognition for their services and face a host of issues when they re-enter civilian life; *and*

**WHEREAS:** Despite serving nine million enrolled veterans every year, Department of Veteran Affairs (VA) hospitals are struggling to provide gender-specific medical care for our women veterans, even as women are the fastest growing population in the VA. The recently passed *Deborah Sampson Act* in Congress seeks to address this issue by requiring the VA to offer primary care for female veterans at all medical centers and clinics, and provide access to counseling to women who suffered service-related sexual trauma as well as those who are at risk of becoming homeless; *and*

**WHEREAS:** It is found that 25% of women veterans experience Military Sexual Trauma (MST) during military service, putting them at increased risk for depression, substance abuse, and PTSD. Some women veterans also do not reach out for services due to anxiety of having to return to a military-related environment. Women veterans are twice more likely to commit suicide than their male counterparts; *and*

**WHEREAS:** Women veterans are also more likely to struggle with childcare and homelessness. Many are single with dependent children and receive lower compensation for civilian work after their time in the service. They also experience difficulty in finding work related to their occupation in the military as they are commonly male-dominated fields, and most lack the college education needed to enter the service sector; *and*

**WHEREAS:** In Massachusetts, The Women Veterans' Network of the Department of Veterans' Services was established in 1997 with the vision of being the central resource for women veterans in Massachusetts. They meet regularly to discuss concerns facing women veterans and provide them with information and support; *and*

**WHEREAS:** We must recognize the challenges that women veterans face and ensure that they receive the necessary health care and support when they return home. We must make sure there are transitional programs to align them with suitable civilian jobs, and to fill unoccupied positions at the VA - especially counselors - with a higher percentage of women. We must raise awareness that women veterans are an integral part of our military who serve our country with honor and bravery, too; *and*

#### **NOW THEREFORE BE IT ORDERED:**

That the Boston City Council affirms its support for women veterans, and honors their service, bravery and sacrifice they have made towards the City of Boston and our country.