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PHILLIPS - RAMOS - REECE - ROSENBERGER - RUHL - SEARS - SLESNICK - STINZIANO - YUKO

To memorialize the President of the United States, the Secretary of Defense, and the United States Congress to end the ban on women serving in combat and to make other provisions regarding the training, equipment, and assignment policy for women in the armed services.

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives of the State of Ohio:

WHEREAS, Women served the United States Army during the American Revolution, nursing the ill and wounded, mending clothing, and cooking for the troops, and have served the United States armed forces in some capacity during every military conflict in the nation's history; and

WHEREAS, An estimated 1,500 women served during the Spanish-American War, 35,000 served during World War I, 400,000 served during World War II, 1,000 served during the Korean conflict, 7,500 served in the Vietnam theater, 41,000 served in the Desert Storm theatre, and more than 225,000 have served in Iraq and Afghanistan; and

WHEREAS, Over 213,800 women currently serve on active duty in the United States armed forces, comprising 14.5 per cent of total active duty United States forces; and

WHEREAS, Over 72,100 women currently serve in the Reserve or National Guard, comprising 15.2 per cent of total United States reserve and guard forces; and

WHEREAS, Over 60,700 Ohio women serve in the United States armed forces today; and

WHEREAS, Women are an intrinsic and necessary part of the United States armed services; and

WHEREAS, The Department of Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services has reported that service members have been concerned that the combat training received by female service members prior to Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom was of inadequate length and used poor methods; and

WHEREAS, Military leaders often consider a service member's capabilities over gender when assigning personnel; and

WHEREAS, Equipment provided to women in theater operations has been reported at times to be inadequate, outdated, improperly sized, and poor in quality; and

WHEREAS, Department of Defense policy prohibits women from being assigned to any unit smaller than a brigade whose primary mission is to direct combat on the ground; and

WHEREAS, Combat assignment restrictions exclude women from serving in approximately 10 per cent of Marine Corps and Army occupational specialties; and

WHEREAS, Combat assignment restrictions act as a barrier to promotion and advancement of women; and

WHEREAS, The armed services have skirted the combat assignment restrictions by attaching women to combat units without formally recognizing their assignment; and

WHEREAS, Women veterans have difficulty getting treatment for post traumatic stress disorder because they have not been formally assigned to a combat unit and have difficulty proving that they have been in combat; and

WHEREAS, Women have been involved in numerous fire fights in the Iraq and Afghanistan theaters, 110 women have been killed in Iraq and 24 women have been killed in Afghanistan, and women will continue to be drawn into combat situations; and

WHEREAS, The current combat assignment restriction does not reflect the many sacrifices and

contributions of women who are or have been serving in the two most recent United States wars; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, That we, the members of the Ohio House of Representatives of the 129th General Assembly of the State of Ohio, urge the President of the United States, the Secretary of Defense, and the United States Congress to lift the ban on women serving in combat, lift the ban which prohibits women from being assigned to any unit smaller than a brigade whose primary mission is to direct combat on the ground, continue the physical fitness requirements of men in combat and require women in combat to adhere to those same requirements, provide women members of the armed services adequate, sufficient, and practical combat training before deployment into theater, issue sufficient quantities of equipment to female service members in sizes that are fit for practical use by them, research and develop equipment designed specifically for use by women, and recraft the military assignment policy to conform to the nature of warfare today; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Clerk of the House of Representatives transmit duly authenticated copies of this resolution to the President of the United States, the Secretary of Defense, the Speaker and Clerk of the United States House of Representatives, the President Pro Tempore and Secretary of the United States Senate, the members of the Ohio Congressional delegation, and the news media of Ohio.