
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 923 Session of
2014

INTRODUCED BY DeLISSIO, SCHREIBER, McGEEHAN, THOMAS,
CALTAGIRONE, FRANKEL, SIMS, DAVIS, D. MILLER, MILLARD,
PARKER, D. COSTA, MUNDY, TOBASH, FREEMAN, M. DALEY,
DONATUCCI, BRIGGS, McCARTER, J. HARRIS, READSHAW,
SCHLOSSBERG, BROWNLEE, MAHONEY, KULA, DeLUCA, COHEN,
YOUNGBLOOD, MURT, DEAN AND FARINA, JUNE 25, 2014

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON VETERANS AFFAIRS AND EMERGENCY
PREPAREDNESS, JUNE 25, 2014

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

1 Establishing the Task Force on Women Veterans' Health Care.

2 WHEREAS, According to the United States Department of
3 Veterans Affairs, the projected veterans population nationwide
4 is approximately 23,000,000 with women making up an estimated
5 10% of that population; and

6 WHEREAS, The United States Department of Veterans Affairs
7 estimates the percentage of female veterans between 2010 and
8 2040 will increase from approximately 9% in 2010 to
9 approximately 18% in 2040; and

10 WHEREAS, According to the United States Department of
11 Veterans Affairs, as of September 2012, this Commonwealth was
12 home to approximately 981,000 veterans, including 719,000
13 wartime veterans from World War II through the Gulf War; and

14 WHEREAS, Females comprise approximately 80,000 of the wartime
15 veterans; and

1 WHEREAS, The number of women veterans will increase with the
2 end of Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom;
3 and

4 WHEREAS, Women veterans often face unique challenges in
5 transitioning from active duty to civilian life; and

6 WHEREAS, The challenging needs facing women veterans can
7 often be overlooked in providing services to such a large
8 veteran population; and

9 WHEREAS, Ensuring the availability of specialized services
10 for physical and mental health, including treatment of post-
11 traumatic stress disorder, traumatic brain injury, military
12 sexual trauma and alcohol and substance abuse tailored to the
13 specific needs of women veterans is essential if the
14 Commonwealth wants to ensure that our returning veterans receive
15 proper care; and

16 WHEREAS, Establishing a task force to study the issues facing
17 women veterans and to make recommendations to the Governor and
18 the General Assembly will provide much needed information and
19 insight from those who address the issues on a daily basis;
20 therefore be it

21 RESOLVED (the Senate concurring), That the Task Force on
22 Women Veterans' Health Care be established; and be it further

23 RESOLVED, That the Task Force on Women Veterans' Health Care
24 consist of 17 members who shall be appointed as follows within
25 25 days after the adoption of this resolution by both chambers:

26 (1) Two members of the Senate, one appointed by the
27 President pro tempore and one appointed by the Minority
28 Leader of the Senate.

29 (2) Two members of the House of Representatives, one
30 appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives and

1 one appointed by the Minority Leader of the House of
2 Representatives.

3 (3) Thirteen members appointed by the Governor as
4 follows:

5 (i) the Deputy Adjutant General for Veterans Affairs
6 of the Pennsylvania National Guard;

7 (ii) the Secretary of Health;

8 (iii) the Secretary of Public Welfare;

9 (iv) the Secretary of Drug and Alcohol Programs;

10 (v) four women veterans who are residents of this
11 Commonwealth;

12 (vi) a representative from the health care provider
13 community in this Commonwealth who has experience in
14 providing health care to returning women veterans;

15 (vii) a representative from the Commonwealth's
16 mental health care provider community with experience in
17 providing mental health care treatment to returning women
18 veterans;

19 (viii) a representative from the Commonwealth's
20 substance abuse and addiction treatment provider
21 community with experience in providing substance abuse
22 and addiction treatment to returning women veterans;

23 (ix) a representative from a Commonwealth advocacy
24 group that represents the interests of sexual assault
25 victims with experience in providing services to women
26 veterans who have suffered military sexual trauma,
27 including harassment or abuse;

28 (x) a representative from a county veteran's court;
29 and

30 (xi) the chairman of the State Veterans' Commission;

1 and be it further

2 RESOLVED, That the Task Force on Women Veterans' Health Care
3 study the health care needs of women veterans, including, but
4 not limited to:

5 (1) quality of and access to mental health services,
6 including services and treatment for post-traumatic stress
7 disorder and traumatic brain injury;

8 (2) in-patient treatment availability;

9 (3) adequacy and availability of appropriate women
10 veterans' health care within the Federal health care system
11 and this Commonwealth; and

12 (4) adequacy, quality of and access to services
13 providing for the identification and treatment of military
14 sexual trauma, including sexual harassment or abuse;

15 and be it further

16 RESOLVED, That the Task Force on Women Veterans' Health Care
17 identify other needs relating to the provisions of women
18 veterans' health care services and make recommendations to the
19 General Assembly and the Governor to address those needs; and be
20 it further

21 RESOLVED, That the Task Force on Women Veterans' Health Care
22 consult with Federal, State and local entities in completing its
23 study, including:

24 (1) The Pennsylvania Congressional Delegation.

25 (2) The United States Department of Veterans Affairs.

26 (3) The County Commissioners Association of
27 Pennsylvania.

28 (4) The Pennsylvania League of Cities and
29 Municipalities.

30 (5) The Pennsylvania Medical Society.

1 (6) The Hospital Association of Pennsylvania.

2 (7) Veterans organizations or other organizations or
3 associations that advocate for women veterans;

4 and be it further

5 RESOLVED, That the Task Force on Women Veterans' Health Care
6 elect one of its members to serve as chairperson; and be it
7 further

8 RESOLVED, That the Task Force on Women Veterans' Health Care
9 conduct its business as follows:

10 (1) The physical presence of nine members constitutes a
11 quorum of the task force.

12 (2) Action of the task force shall be authorized or
13 ratified by a majority vote of its members.

14 (3) A member not physically present may participate by
15 teleconference or video conference.

16 (4) The following shall apply:

17 (i) The task force shall meet as necessary, but no
18 fewer than five times prior to April 30, 2015. Additional
19 meetings may be called by the chairperson as necessary.

20 (ii) The chairperson shall schedule a meeting upon
21 written request of eight members of the task force.

22 (iii) The first meeting shall be convened within 45
23 days of the adoption of this resolution by both chambers
24 at a time and place established by the Governor.

25 (iv) The task force shall hold public hearings as
26 necessary to obtain the information required to conduct
27 its review.

28 (v) Members shall not receive compensation but shall
29 be reimbursed for reasonable and necessary expenses
30 incurred in service of the task force;

1 and be it further

2 RESOLVED, That the Department of Health and the Department of
3 Military and Veterans Affairs provide staff support to the task
4 force; and be it further

5 RESOLVED, That, upon request of the Task Force on Women
6 Veterans' Health Care, a State agency assist the task force in
7 the completion of its duties, including, to the extent permitted
8 by law, relating to confidentiality to furnish information and
9 advice to members of the task force necessary to perform their
10 duties; and be it further

11 RESOLVED, That the Task Force on Women Veterans' Health Care
12 have the following powers:

13 (1) To examine and analyze the current delivery of
14 health care services to women veterans at the Federal and
15 State level.

16 (2) To review and analyze law, procedures, practices and
17 rules relating to delivery of health care services to women
18 veterans.

19 (3) To hold public hearings for the taking of testimony
20 and the requesting of documents.

21 (4) To administer oaths and affirmations to witnesses
22 appearing before the task force at the request of the
23 chairperson;

24 and be it further

25 RESOLVED, That the Task Force on Women Veterans' Health Care
26 have the following duties:

27 (1) To accept and review written comments from
28 individuals and organizations.

29 (2) To make, by April 30, 2015, a final report to the
30 Governor, the Senate and the House of Representatives.

1 (3) To include in the report under paragraph (2)
2 recommendations based on its review:

3 (i) To improve the delivery of health care services
4 to women veterans.

5 (ii) To implement any necessary changes in State
6 statutes and practices, policies and procedures relating
7 to the delivery of health care services to women
8 veterans.

9 (4) To make reports as follows:

10 (i) The task force may file status reports and
11 updates with the Governor, the Senate and the House of
12 Representatives as it deems appropriate.

13 (ii) A report under this paragraph shall be adopted
14 at a public meeting.

15 (iii) A report under this paragraph shall be a
16 public record under the act of February 14, 2008 (P.L.6,
17 No.3), known as the Right-to-Know Law;

18 and be it further

19 RESOLVED, That the Task Force on Women Veterans' Health Care
20 expire May 31, 2015.