

**Assembly Concurrent Resolution**

**No. 33**

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**Introduced by Assembly Member Atkins**  
**(Coauthors: Assembly Members Eggman and Irwin)**  
(Coauthor: Senator Fuller)

February 25, 2015

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Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 33—Relative to women veterans.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

ACR 33, as introduced, Atkins. Women veterans.

This measure would proclaim June 12, 2015, as Women Veterans' Day and urge all citizens to join in celebrating the many contributions of women to our military forces.

Fiscal committee: no.

1     WHEREAS, Women have proudly served their country  
2 throughout all periods of the history of the United States, whether  
3 disguised as male soldiers during the American Revolution and  
4 Civil War, as nurses in World War I, or as combat helicopter pilots  
5 in Afghanistan; and  
6     WHEREAS, Women have formally been a part of the United  
7 States Armed Forces since the inception of the Army Nurse Corps  
8 in 1901, but have informally served since the inception of our  
9 nation's military; and  
10    WHEREAS, During the American Revolution, women served  
11 on the battlefield alongside the men, mainly as nurses, water  
12 bearers, often called "Molly Pitchers," cooks, laundresses, and  
13 saboteurs, and despite Army regulations that only men could enlist,

1 women who wanted to join in the fighting circumvented the rules  
2 by masquerading as young men or boys; and

3 WHEREAS, In 1917, the Navy announced it would open  
4 enlistment to women and about 12,000 female yeomen entered the  
5 Navy and filled a variety of jobs including draftsmen, interpreters,  
6 couriers, and translators; and

7 WHEREAS, Three hundred seven women enlisted in the Marine  
8 Corps during World War I. Like their sisters in the Navy, they  
9 were limited to the enlisted ranks and worked mainly in  
10 Washington, D.C., doing various administrative jobs. Women's  
11 service contributions in World War I showed that they either had,  
12 or could quickly learn, nontraditional skills needed by the military;  
13 and

14 WHEREAS, Following Pearl Harbor, Congress authorized new  
15 women's components for each of the services and increased the  
16 number of active duty positions in the Army and Navy Nurse  
17 Corps. In May 1942, the Army was given the authority to establish  
18 the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps, also known as the WAACs.  
19 The Navy, Coast Guard, and Marine Corps followed suit, but rather  
20 than making women an auxiliary component, they opted to enroll  
21 them in the reserves on the same basis as their male counterparts;  
22 and

23 WHEREAS, At the end of the war in 1945, of the approximately  
24 12 million people remaining in the Armed Forces, about 280,000  
25 were women; and

26 WHEREAS, With the passage of the Women's Armed Services  
27 Integration Act of 1948, women became a permanent part of the  
28 United States military, but women continued to be restricted to 2  
29 percent of the military population. That restriction was finally  
30 lifted in 1967 with the amendment of the Women's Armed Services  
31 Integration Act, which also opened senior officer ranks to women;  
32 and

33 WHEREAS, The early 1990s were a historic time for women  
34 in the military with over 40,000 women deploying in support of  
35 the Persian Gulf War, making women service members more  
36 visible in the eyes of the public. In addition, in 1992, the Defense  
37 Authorization Act repealed combat exclusion laws that had  
38 prevented women from flying combat aircrafts; and

39 WHEREAS, Women who have served in the United States  
40 military are often referred to as "invisible veterans" because their

1 service contributions until the 1970s went largely unrecognized  
2 by politicians, the media, academia, and the general public; and

3 WHEREAS, Even though women have been officially serving  
4 in the military since the creation of the Army Nurse Corps in 1901,  
5 they have not always been considered qualified for veteran status  
6 for the purpose of receiving benefits from the Department of  
7 Veterans Affairs. Even after women were granted veteran status,  
8 issues of access, exclusion, and improper management of their  
9 health care still remained; and

10 WHEREAS, It was not until well after World War II that women  
11 who served in the military began to officially be recognized as  
12 veterans; and

13 WHEREAS, In the late 1970s and early 1980s, many of the  
14 contributions made by women in World War II were formally  
15 recognized through laws that granted these women with veteran  
16 status for their time in service. This opened the doors for women  
17 to take advantage of programs, opportunities, and benefits from  
18 the federal and state governments, the Department of Veterans  
19 Affairs, and other veteran service organizations; and

20 WHEREAS, The 1980 decennial census marked the first time  
21 that information on women veterans was ever captured in a large  
22 national survey. At the time of the 1980 decennial census, women  
23 made up just over 2 percent of the veteran population. Today, that  
24 proportion has increased to almost 8 percent; and

25 WHEREAS, Over the past 20 years, the Veterans Health  
26 Administration (VHA) has introduced initiatives designed to  
27 improve health care access and quality of care for women veterans;  
28 and

29 WHEREAS, In 2008, VHA's Women Veterans Health Strategic  
30 Health Care Group began a five-year plan to redesign the nation's  
31 health care delivery system for women. A fundamental component  
32 of this plan was to ensure that all women veterans had access to  
33 comprehensive primary care from skilled women's health  
34 providers; and

35 WHEREAS, There are currently over 2 million women veterans  
36 living in the United States and Puerto Rico and of those 2 million,  
37 165,962 make California their home; now, therefore, be it

38 *Resolved by the Assembly of the State of California, the Senate*  
39 *thereof concurring,* That the Legislature, hereby proclaims June  
40 12, 2015, as Women Veterans' Day, and urges all citizens to join

- 1 in celebrating the many contributions of women to our military
- 2 forces; and be it further
- 3 *Resolved*, That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit copies
- 4 of this resolution to the author for appropriate distribution.