

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY JUNE 20, 1996

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—1995–96 REGULAR SESSION

Assembly Concurrent Resolution

No. 77

Introduced by Assembly Member—~~Baca~~ Members *Baca, Ackerman, Aguiar, Alby, Alpert, Archie-Hudson, Baldwin, Bates, Battin, Baugh, Boland, Bordonaro, Bowen, Bowler, Brewer, Brown, Brulte, Burton, Bustamante, Caldera, Campbell, Cannella, Conroy, Cortese, Cunneen, Davis, Ducheny, Escutia, Figueroa, Firestone, Friedman, Frusetta, Gallegos, Goldsmith, Granlund, Hannigan, Harvey, Hauser, Hawkins, Hoge, House, Kaloogian, Katz, Knight, Knox, Kuehl, Kuykendall, Lee, Margett, Martinez, Mazzoni, McPherson, Migden, Morrissey, Morrow, Kevin Murray, Napolitano, Olberg, Poochigian, Pringle, Rainey, Richter, Rogan, Setencich, Sweeney, Takasugi, Thompson, Tucker, Vasconcellos, Villaraigosa, Weggeland, and Woods*

March 25, 1996

Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 77—Relative to women veterans.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

ACR 77, as amended, *Baca*. California Women Veterans Week.

This measure would acknowledge that women veterans are pioneers in nontraditional roles, and that women who serve our state during wartime and during peace should be honored, and would designate the week commencing November 11, 1996, as California Women Veterans Week.

Fiscal committee: no.

1 WHEREAS, Historically, 21-year old Deborah Sampson
2 (1760–1827), a trim, blue-eyed, taller-than-average
3 female, dressed herself in a soldier’s uniform and entered
4 a Continental Army recruiting office posing as a man,
5 thus becoming the first woman to fight as a uniformed
6 U.S. soldier, being wounded twice; and

7 WHEREAS, Thereafter Deborah Sampson enlisted,
8 under the name of Robert Surtlieff (her brother’s first
9 and middle names), in the 4th Massachusetts Regiment
10 and was a courageous, bold, and fearless soldier; and

11 WHEREAS, Admission of women to the service
12 academies began in the fall of 1976, the academies
13 provide single-track education, allowing only for minor
14 variations in the cadet program based on physiological
15 differences between men and women. They must remain
16 unmarried until graduation and serve at least five years
17 on active duty; and

18 WHEREAS, U.S. military service academies graduated
19 their first women officers in May 1980; and

20 WHEREAS, Grace Hopper (1906–1992) was the first
21 female in the U.S. Armed Forces to rise to the rank of
22 Admiral in the Navy, and was a computer science pioneer
23 and inventor; and

24 WHEREAS, Aleda E. Lutz graduated in 1937 from the
25 Saginaw General Hospital School of Nursing in Michigan
26 and was commissioned a second lieutenant in 1942 in the
27 newly created Aerial Evacuation Service of the U.S.
28 Army. Lieutenant Lutz volunteered for duty with the
29 802nd Medical Air Evacuation Squadron, the first of its
30 kind, and had flown 814 hours and was on her 196th
31 mission when her plane crashed; and

32 WHEREAS, Lieutenant Aleda E. Lutz is believed to be
33 the first woman combat fatality of World War II when her
34 C-47 hospital plane evacuating wounded soldiers in 1944
35 from Lyon, France, crashed, killing all aboard; and

36 WHEREAS, During the war, a confiscated cruise liner
37 was converted into a hospital ship and was named the U.S.
38 hospital ship Aleda E. Lutz; and



1 WHEREAS, The number of women serving in the
2 United States Armed Forces and the number of women
3 veterans continue to increase; and

4 WHEREAS, Women veterans have contributed greatly
5 to the security of the United States through honorable
6 military service, often involving great hardship and
7 danger; and

8 WHEREAS, Women now comprise about 12 percent of
9 our active duty armed forces and constitute the fastest
10 growing segment of the veterans population. There are
11 more than 1,200,000 women veterans in the United States
12 representing 4.6 percent of the total veteran population;
13 and

14 WHEREAS, Although the share of female veterans
15 under 35 years of age (27.7 percent) and the percentage
16 of those 65 and over (22.1 percent) were both noticeably
17 larger than the proportions for similarly aged male
18 veterans (13.3 percent and 16.2 percent, respectively),
19 the median age for all female veterans (52.0 years) at the
20 end of 1990 was almost the same as that for male veterans
21 (52.2 years); and

22 WHEREAS, African-American female veterans
23 (123,000) represented 11.1 percent of the overall female
24 veteran count. As of 1990, more than one-half of these
25 veterans were under 40 years of age; and

26 WHEREAS, Female veterans who served only during
27 peacetime accounted for the largest subgroup of former
28 military personnel with 432,000, or 37.2 percent, of the
29 1990 female veteran population total. This group of
30 female veterans represented more than twice the
31 comparable share (17.9 percent) among males; and

32 WHEREAS, The 432,000 peacetime-only female
33 veterans consisted of 216,000 ex-service personnel who
34 served exclusively during the post-Vietnam era, 131,000
35 who participated either only between World War I and
36 World War II or only between World War II and the
37 Korean War, and 85,000 who served only between the
38 Korean War and the Vietnam era. The number of
39 peacetime-only female veterans had increased by 75,000
40 since 1980, when the total was 357,000; and



1 WHEREAS, Overall, in 1990 levels of educational
2 attainment for both male and female veterans were fairly
3 equal. More than three-quarters (77.3 percent) of the
4 total female veteran population had graduated from high
5 school. Among male veterans, 73.4 percent had
6 completed high school. College graduates comprised 14.8
7 percent of the female veteran population as of 1980, a
8 share a little below that (18.7 percent) for male veterans;
9 and

10 WHEREAS, The number of women veterans will
11 continue to grow as military recruiters increasingly rely
12 on women to staff the armed forces and as the roles and
13 responsibilities of women in the armed forces expand and
14 change in important ways; and

15 WHEREAS, This year, for example, women are
16 expected to account for a full 20 percent of the Army's
17 enlistees; women have now come aboard the nuclear
18 aircraft carrier Eisenhower (CV-69), the first U.S.
19 warship aboard which women will serve; and in 1994,
20 First Lieutenant Jeanie Flynn became the first woman to
21 train in and pilot an F-15E Strike Eagle, the world's most
22 sophisticated jet fighter; and

23 WHEREAS, As the roles and responsibilities of women
24 who serve in the armed forces change, so will their need
25 for Veterans Affairs (VA) health care and other services,
26 more women veterans will come to VA care for their
27 service-connected conditions and more women veterans
28 will rely on VA for other veterans benefits and services;
29 and

30 WHEREAS, As lack of attention to the special needs of
31 women veterans has discouraged or prevented many
32 women veterans from taking full advantage of the
33 benefits and services to which they are entitled; and

34 WHEREAS, Some health experts are petitioning the
35 U.S. Government to require the Department of Veteran
36 Affairs (DVA) to conduct a follow-up investigation into
37 its earlier findings regarding the high incidence of cancer
38 among women veterans; and

39 WHEREAS, A joint survey conducted by the Federal
40 DVA and Louis Harris Associates found that women



1 veterans develop cancer at nearly twice the rate of other
2 adult women; and

3 WHEREAS, There is a need to improve and expand
4 health care services to women veterans by requiring
5 timely access to health services and further expanding
6 the list of standard tests available to women, establishing
7 mammography quality standards, encouraging the
8 inclusion of women in medical research, extending the
9 availability of sexual trauma counseling, and calling for
10 the development of plans to correct deficiencies relating
11 to patient privacy afforded to women veterans; and

12 WHEREAS, Women in the U.S. Armed Forces (the
13 Army, Navy, Air Forces, Marines, and Coast Guard) are
14 all fully integrated with male personnel. Expansion of
15 military women's programs began in the Department of
16 Defense in the 1973 fiscal year; and

17 WHEREAS, Although women were precluded from
18 serving in combat positions, policy changes in the
19 Department of Defense have made possible the
20 assignment of women to almost all other career fields; and

21 WHEREAS, Career progression for women is now
22 comparable to that for male personnel, as women are
23 routinely assigned to overseas locations formerly closed to
24 female personnel. Women are in command of activities
25 and units that have missions other than administration of
26 women; and

27 WHEREAS, As of June 1993, women made up 11.6
28 percent of the U.S. Armed Forces. Almost 25 percent of
29 medical and dental specialists were women; of active
30 duty women personnel, fewer than one percent served in
31 the infantry, in gun crews, or aboard ship; and

32 WHEREAS, The first woman to report for sea duty
33 aboard U.S. Navy noncombatant ships occurred
34 November 1, 1978, and under new rules instituted in 1993,
35 women are allowed to fly combat aircraft and to serve
36 aboard warships. Women are still restricted from service
37 in ground combat units; and

38 WHEREAS, By early November 1990, the United States
39 had assembled a military force of some 230,000 men and
40 women in the Persian Gulf (roughly half the size of that



1 the U.S. had put into Vietnam in the mid-1960's, a buildup
2 that took several years) in the three-month deployment
3 of Operation Desert Shield; and

4 WHEREAS, Pursuant to Presidential Executive Order
5 12744, some 470,000 American men and women of the
6 U.S. Armed Forces were called to service in and around
7 the Arabian Peninsula where they were engaged in
8 combat with the Armed Forces of Iraq, and were at risk
9 of great personal injury and death. More than 11,500
10 members of the U.S. Military Reserve who were residents
11 of California were called to active duty; and

12 WHEREAS, As Operation Desert Shield soon relented
13 to Operation Desert Storm in January 1991, and
14 American troops had to adjust to a harsh environment of
15 hot days, and cold nights; a rainy season in winter; and
16 sand everywhere. They also had to adjust to an unfamiliar
17 Islamic culture and regional customs; and

18 WHEREAS, Inadvertent slights could blossom into
19 larger problems unless the troops were briefed and
20 understood the conduct required. No alcoholic beverages
21 were permitted. No adult magazines could be brought
22 into the region. Female personnel were instructed not to
23 bare their arms or legs in public, and men and women
24 were instructed not to hold hands in public. Women in a
25 Massachusetts reserve military police battalion were
26 informed that they could appear in Saudi towns out of
27 uniform only if they wore long, black dresses, and walked
28 12 paces behind any man they accompanied; and

29 WHEREAS, On many occasions U.S. women in uniform
30 were stopped in the streets by Saudi men, who would
31 engage them in conversation, something they would
32 never do with Saudi women. To the credit of troops and
33 officers alike, the number of negative incidents with
34 Saudis was small. U.S. forces concentrated on training,
35 training, and more training; and

36 WHEREAS, The American public was surprised by the
37 number of instances in which option active duty and
38 reserve spouses were deployed to the Gulf, often
39 necessitating that they leave their children in the care of
40 others. Operation Desert Shield separated families in



1 ways not frequently experienced in the past conflicts. The
2 American news media devoted considerable coverage to
3 the large number of women in uniform going to the
4 Persian Gulf; and

5 WHEREAS, Women, in fact, have served in front-line
6 units as aircraft mechanics, nurses, physicians, and
7 helicopter pilots. A few women flew as flight crew in E-3
8 AWACS aircraft that, although they remained mainly
9 over Saudi territory, could have been high-priority
10 targets for Iraqi fighters; and

11 WHEREAS, The typical soldier, marine, airman and
12 airwoman, in active duty as well as reserve units, under
13 General H. Norman Schwarzkopf was 27 years of age, six
14 years older than the average in the Vietnam War, and he
15 or she was much more likely to be married and have
16 children than were previous Americans in uniform; and

17 WHEREAS, One of the oldest Americans serving in the
18 Gulf was Lorain Kuryla, from Chicago, an Air Force
19 reservist who was a personnel officer with the 928th
20 Tactical Airlift Group, and the 63-year old grandmother
21 of five. Twenty years of an all-volunteer military force
22 had created this older, more stable force, the oldest U.S.
23 force to be sent in to the field since the American Civil
24 War (1860–1865); and

25 WHEREAS, It is appropriate for California to proclaim
26 our respect for the dedication, perseverance, courage,
27 capabilities, and professionalism exhibited by U.S. service
28 women; and

29 WHEREAS, Designating a week to recognize women
30 veterans will help both to promote important gains made
31 by women veterans and to focus attention on the special
32 needs of women veterans; now, therefore, be it

33 *Resolved by the Assembly of the State of California, the*
34 *Senate thereof concurring,* That the Legislature
35 acknowledges that women veterans are pioneers in
36 nontraditional roles and that women who have served our
37 communities and our state during times of war and peace
38 should be honored on behalf of a grateful state
39 commending their courage, devotion, and spirit; and be
40 it further



1 *Resolved*, That the Legislature of the State of California
2 hereby designates the week beginning November 11,
3 1996, as California Women Veterans Week.

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