

Resolution No. 610

VA HEALTH CARE FOR WOMEN VETERANS

WHEREAS, more than 447,000 women veterans received VA health care in 2015, which is a 123 percent increase from 2013, and female veterans are higher users of primary and mental health services than their male counterparts; and

WHEREAS, VA estimated that women veterans as a percentage of veterans using VA health care will continue to grow, making it essential that VA continue to staff and equip its medical facilities to meet their specific health care needs; and

WHEREAS, women veterans have reported that VA staff continue to confuse them for spouses or caregivers and even challenge their veteran status; and

WHEREAS, women veterans also reported concerns regarding the gender specific competencies of VA health care professionals; and

WHEREAS, VA reported in 2015 that 66 percent of women veterans are assigned to a Designated Women's Health Provider (DWHP), who have experience and training in women's health care; now, therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, by the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States, that we acknowledge VA has improved the care and services it provides women veterans, but we urge VA to continue to monitor and enhance health care services available to women veterans at all VA medical facilities and expand its designated women's health program to mental health care to ensure veterans have access to mental health care providers who understand women-specific mental health conditions; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we urge the Secretary of Veteran Affairs to improve outreach to older women veterans, allow women to choose the gender of their VA health care providers and properly train VA's workforce to treat women veterans with the respect and dignity they have earned and deserve.

Submitted by Commander-in-Chief
To Committee on VETERANS SERVICE RESOLUTIONS