

BY: M. of A. Hunter

MEMORIALIZING Governor Andrew M. Cuomo to proclaim
June 12, 2021, as Women Veterans Recognition Day in
the State of New York

WHEREAS, Seventy-three years ago, on June 12, 1948, President Harry S. Truman signed into law the Women's Armed Services Act of 1948 (P.L. 625-80th Congress); this law ensured that women would have a permanent place in the Army, Navy, Air Force and Marines; and

WHEREAS, The late Senator Margaret Chase Smith from Maine authorized the legislation that President Truman signed; the Act remains the most significant legislation pertaining to women's military service and is the cornerstone for policies and regulations affecting women; and

WHEREAS, Women have always answered the call to duty, serving the United States of America with integrity and respect; and

WHEREAS, Women make up nearly 15% of today's active duty military and 18 percent of those who serve in the United States guard and Reserve Forces are women; and

WHEREAS, As of 2015 women made up nearly 12.3 percent of OEF (Operation Enduring Freedom); OIF (Operation Iraq Freedom) and ONO (Operation New Dawn) veterans; and

WHEREAS, In 2017, the median age of women veterans was 51 years compared to 65 years of age for males; and

WHEREAS, Women from New York who have served in the Armed Forces of the United States have made countless contributions and tremendous sacrifices; and

WHEREAS, It is important to recognize the contributions of New York women veterans, and to educate the people of New York concerning the role of women in our military; and

WHEREAS, Women serving in the military continue to demonstrate their professionalism, dedication, leadership, and skills, as well as the patriotism and love for their country as they mobilize in record numbers to support Operation Noble Eagle, Operation Enduring Freedom, Operation Iraqi Freedom, Operation New Dawn, Operation Inherent Resolve and the Global War on Terrorism; and

WHEREAS, Today there are more than 2 million women veterans in the United States, representing 8.4 percent of the total veteran's population; and

WHEREAS, Among the Armed Forces, there are over 60,000 women veterans in the State of New York; and

WHEREAS, Women who have served this country in uniform, during wartime and peacetime service, have earned our respect and thanks; and

WHEREAS, In 1998, the State of New York dedicated The New York State Women Veterans Memorial located in Albany, New York, to honor the 1.2 million women in military service over the past 200 years; and

WHEREAS, In January of 2013, an announcement was made by Defense Secretary Leon Panetta that the military would be lifting the policy against women in combat roles; and

WHEREAS, The first woman to serve aboard a Navy fast-attack submarine reported to duty on the USS Minnesota in January 2015; and

WHEREAS, The American Legion elected its first female national commander at their 99th National Convention in August of 2017; Commander Denise Rohan served on active duty as a stock control and accounting specialist and repair parts specialist course instructor at Fort Lee, Virginia, where she was honorably discharge in 1976; and

WHEREAS, The American Legion Department of New York elected US Navy veteran Rena M. Nessler at the 99th convention in Syracuse, New York, in July of 2017; Commander Nessler served from 1969 to 1972, and was honorably discharged as a yeoman third class; she is the first woman to hold the position of Commander of the American Legion Department of New York; and

WHEREAS, General Ann Dunwoody, the first women in U.S. military history to achieve the rank of four-star general, was named as the 2019 recipient of the Sylvanus Thayer Award; and

WHEREAS, Women Veterans Recognition Day is a living testament to the courage of so many; from its broad base of shared concern and responsive endeavor, there yet emanates the current of valiant tradition and the irrepressible tide of freedom; and

WHEREAS, Through its avowed commitment to those who have served in the cause of America's Freedom, Women Veterans Recognition Day does so unselfishly advance the spirit of the united purpose and shared concern which is the unalterable manifestation of our American experience; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to pay tribute to the bravery, patriotism and sacrifice made by women, both those still living and those who did in service of our great country; and most proudly commemorate the 73rd Anniversary of the signing of the Women's Armed Forces Service Act of 1948, which later came to be known as Women Veterans Recognition Day; and to memorialize Governor Andrew M. Cuomo to proclaim, Wednesday, June 12, 2021, as Women Veterans Recognition Day in the State of New York; and be it further

RESOLVED That copies of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to The Honorable Andrew M. Cuomo, Governor of the State of New York; and Past Department Commander Rene M. Nessler, The American

Legion Department of New York.