

House Concurrent Resolution No. 26

98TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

INTRODUCED BY REPRESENTATIVE SHULL.

0244H.011

2 **WHEREAS**, each year Americans pause during the month of March to pay special
3 tribute to the contributions that women have made to our national life, and outstanding among
4 the myriad roles that women have assumed over the course of this country's history have been
5 those undertaken as part of the nation's armed forces; and

6 **WHEREAS**, long before they gained regular admission to the military, thousands of
7 women assisted the uniformed branches in a variety of ways; they worked as nurses, water
8 bearers, laundresses, and cooks, sometimes served as spies and saboteurs, and on occasion even
9 took up arms; and

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11 **WHEREAS**, in 1901, the United States Army broke new ground by creating an actual
12 nurses corps, and the navy followed in 1908; the ranks of these units swelled during World War
13 I, when nearly 23,000 women served as nurses within the American military; the U.S. Navy and
14 Marine Corps enlisted nearly 13,000 additional women as yeomen and reservists and assigned
15 them to duty stateside, to free their male counterparts for combat at sea and abroad; and

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17 **WHEREAS**, the participation of women in the military surged during World War II,
18 with more than 400,000 filling posts at home and overseas; to more fully utilize their abilities,
19 the army established the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps, later known as the Women's Army
20 Corps; the army also created the WASP (Women Airforce Service Pilots), while the navy
21 organized the WAVES (Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service), the Marine Corps
22 established the Marine Corps Women's Reserve, and the Coast Guard created a reserve unit
23 known as the SPARs; in spite of widespread misgivings about their suitability for the work,
24 women proved themselves in a wide array of assignments, and in 1948 an Act of Congress
25 granted them permanent status in the regular and reserve forces; and

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27 **WHEREAS**, barriers to the participation of women in the military continued to fall; legal
28 provisions placing a two percent cap on the number of women serving and a ceiling on the
29 highest grade a woman could achieve were repealed in 1967; by 1972, the various Reserve
30 Officers' Training Corps programs were opened to women, and in 1976 women were admitted
31 to the service academies; they are now eligible to enter more than 90 percent of all career fields
32 in the armed forces; and

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34 **WHEREAS**, women have continued to deploy in times of conflict: some 1,000 served
35 in theater during the Korean War and 7,500 during the Vietnam War; hundreds saw duty in
36 operations in Central America in the 1980s, and in 1991, 41,000 women served in theater in
37 Operation Desert Storm; and

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39 **WHEREAS**, today, approximately 344,500 women are serving in the United States
40 military; they constitute about 14 percent of active duty personnel and about 10 percent of the
41 American forces in Iraq and Afghanistan; and

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43 **WHEREAS**, the operations focused on those two countries have placed enormous
44 demands on all who have taken part; like their male compatriots, many women have served
45 multiple tours, and large numbers have been injured, many grievously; as of mid-January 2011,
46 136 women had given their lives in those two wars; and

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48 **WHEREAS**, the increased involvement of women in the military is reflected by the
49 number of women veterans, which now totals 1.8 million; Missouri is home to more than 45,340
50 women veterans; and

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52 **WHEREAS**, Missourians have always honored the selflessness and sacrifice of those
53 who perform military service, and these women are indeed worthy of that recognition; it is also
54 fitting that needs they have incurred in connection with that service be acknowledged and
55 alleviated, whether they concern physical or psychological wounds or the challenges of caring
56 for their families or reintegrating into civilian life; and

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58 **WHEREAS**, the women who have served in the United States armed forces have
59 demonstrated tenacity, courage, and professionalism, and they are deserving of their fellow
60 citizens' deepest gratitude and unfailing support;

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62 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the members of the House of
63 Representatives of the Ninety-eighth General Assembly, First Regular Session, the Senate
64 concurring therein, hereby designate the month of March each year from 2015 through 2025 as
65 Women Veterans Month in tribute to the immeasurable contributions that women in the military
66 have made to this nation.

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68 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the General Assembly encourages and urges all
69 citizens of this state to reflect upon the service and sacrifices of women veterans.

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