Whereas, The active component of the Armed Forces is now 14 percent female and the reserve component is 18 percent female who, as they transition into veteran status, are now making up the fastest growing cohort within the veteran community⁴; and

Whereas, By 2020, women will comprise nearly 11% of the total veteran population¹,²; and

Whereas, Over the last decade alone, the number of women veterans using Veteran Affairs (VA) health care has nearly doubled¹,²; and

Whereas, The National Survey of Women Veterans reports that about 40% of women veterans who served in the recent conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan incorrectly believe that only those with service connected disability are eligible for VA health care²; and

Whereas, A 2014 membership survey of Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America (IAVA) found that only 58% of women veterans reported being contacted by the Veteran’s Affairs health care or seeing VA advertisements about women’s eligibility for VA services and benefits³; and

Whereas, Cross-sectional analysis of data provided by 286 female veterans of Operation Iraqi Freedom and/or Operation Enduring Freedom found that 76% of women veterans who were prescribed drugs by VA health care providers had not been warned about risks of medication-induced birth defects⁴; and

Whereas, The Study of Barriers for Women Veterans to VA Health Care Final Report published by the VA found that 19% of women veterans who utilize VA health care services reported avoiding the VA because of past sexual trauma, citing the historically male dominated culture and patient base in VA facilities as a factor⁵,⁶; and

Whereas, Only 30% of facilities provided Substance Use Disorder (SUD) women specific groups, and only 14% provided women specific SUD-Posttraumatic Stress Disorder groups⁷; and

² Friedman SA, Phibbs CS, Schmitt SK, Hayes PM, Herrera L, Frayne SM, New Women Veterans in the VHA: A Longitudinal Profile, Womens Health Issues. 2011
Whereas, Women veterans with a history of military sexual assault and/or posttraumatic stress symptomatology perceive that they are not receiving the same quality of care as male veterans\(^4,8\); and

Whereas, Only 58% of VA sites offer gynecological services and, of those, only 25% offer infertility treatment\(^9,10\); and

Whereas, In a study of women veterans who reported using the VA system, 72% indicate that they do not utilize the nearest VA facility for primary care, with the most common reason being “the women’s services I need are not available [at the facility]\(^{11}\); therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the American Medical Association recognize the disparity in access to care for women veterans (New HOD Policy); and be it further

RESOLVED, That our AMA encourage research to address this population’s specific needs to improve patient outcomes. (New HOD Policy)

Fiscal Note: Not yet determined

Received: 10/20/17

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\(^4\) Ziobrowski H, Sartor CE, Tsai J, Pietrzak RH., *Gender differences in mental and physical health conditions in U.S. veterans: Results from the National Health and Resilience in Veterans Study*. J Psychosom Res. 2017

