



CITY OF BOSTON IN CITY COUNCIL

RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF S. 5210, *Building Resources and Access for Veterans' Mental Health Engagement Act of 2024* or the “*BRAVE Act of 2024*”

WHEREAS: Veterans have sacrificed a normal life to put their lives on the line for this country. In return, this country must take care of veterans when they come home. Unfortunately, veterans face huge problems when returning to civilian life; *and*

WHEREAS: According to a comprehensive Disabled American Veterans (DAV) report, suicide among women veterans rose by 24.1 percent between 2020 and 2021 - nearly 4 times the increase among male veterans. Women veterans are also 2 times more likely to attempt suicide compared to male veterans. In total, over 50 percent of women veteran deaths are due to self-inflicted firearm injuries; *and*

WHEREAS: Women veterans face specific mental health and physical issues that are often overlooked by Veteran Centers and the Department of Veteran Affairs (VA). 1 in 3 reported experiencing military sexual assault and nearly 1 in 5 reported experiencing partner domestic violence in the past year; *and*

WHEREAS: The VA's model of predicting veterans at high-risk of suicide uses male veterans as a baseline. This means sexual assault, menopause, substance abuse, and other issues that increase suicidality specifically among women veterans are not adequately accounted for; *and*

WHEREAS: S. 5210, *BRAVE Act*, seeks to improve veteran care in three main areas. The Act seeks to ensure workers receive fair pay and ensure they have proper working conditions. It also outlines models to expand veteran centers' technology, access to proper information and existence into rural and high risk areas; *and*

WHEREAS: S. 5210, *BRAVE Act* addresses problems unique to women veterans by conducting surveys and listening sessions to gather information based on their experiences to improve the VA. The Act also requires the VA to incorporate risk factors such as sexual assault in assessments and risk models; *and*

WHEREAS: We must recognize the challenges that members of our Armed Forces, veterans and disabled veterans face upon returning from service. This Act not only allows for the improvement of the veteran centers nationwide, but also improves care for women veterans who experience issues not that are not adequately accounted for; *and*

NOW THEREFORE BE IT ORDERED:

That the Boston City Council strongly supports the passage of S. 5210, *Building Resources and Access for Veterans' Mental Health Engagement Act of 2024* or the “*BRAVE Act of 2024*” in Congress, and urges prompt action in the passage of these legislation.

Filed on: October 30, 2024