

Second Regular Session
Seventy-fourth General Assembly
STATE OF COLORADO

INTRODUCED

LLS NO. 24-0914.01 Caroline Martin x5902

HOUSE BILL 24-1236

HOUSE SPONSORSHIP

Holtorf and Parenti,

SENATE SPONSORSHIP

Pelton B. and Kirkmeyer,

House Committees

State, Civic, Military, & Veterans Affairs

Senate Committees

A BILL FOR AN ACT

101 CONCERNING THE CREATION OF "WOMEN VETERANS APPRECIATION
102 DAY".

Bill Summary

(Note: This summary applies to this bill as introduced and does not reflect any amendments that may be subsequently adopted. If this bill passes third reading in the house of introduction, a bill summary that applies to the reengrossed version of this bill will be available at <http://leg.colorado.gov>.)

The bill establishes women veterans appreciation day, which is observed on June 12 of each year.

1 *Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Colorado:*

Shading denotes HOUSE amendment. Double underlining denotes SENATE amendment.
Capital letters or bold & italic numbers indicate new material to be added to existing law.
Dashes through the words or numbers indicate deletions from existing law.

1 **SECTION 1.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, **add** 24-11-117 as
2 follows:

3 **24-11-117. Women Veterans Appreciation Day - legislative**
4 **declaration.** (1) THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY FINDS AND DECLARES THAT:

5 (a) THROUGHOUT OUR NATION'S HISTORY, OVER THREE MILLION
6 WOMEN HAVE VOLUNTEERED TO SERVE OUR COUNTRY BY PROVIDING
7 MILITARY SERVICE TO THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA. WOMEN HAVE
8 COURAGEOUSLY SERVED AND HISTORICALLY TRAILBLAZED THROUGHOUT
9 THE YEARS, INCLUDING DISGUIISING THEMSELVES AS MALE SOLDIERS
10 DURING THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION AND CIVIL WAR; SERVING IN THE
11 UNITED STATES ARMY NURSE CORPS, SIGNAL CORPS, AND IN CLERICAL
12 POSITIONS DURING WORLD WAR I WHEN WOMEN DID NOT HAVE THE RIGHT
13 TO VOTE; AND SERVING AS MECHANICS, CLERICAL WORKERS, TRUCK
14 DRIVERS, FERRY AND SHUTTLE PILOTS, AND IN AIR COMBAT TACTICS
15 DURING WORLD WAR II.

16 (b) THERE ARE CURRENTLY OVER EIGHT THOUSAND FIVE HUNDRED
17 COLORADO WOMEN SERVING IN THE SIX BRANCHES OF THE ARMED FORCES
18 AND OVER FORTY-SEVEN THOUSAND COLORADO WOMEN VETERANS. ON
19 MARCH 1, 2013, THE FIRST FEMALE MAJOR GENERAL WAS CHOSEN TO BE
20 THE SUPERINTENDENT OF THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE ACADEMY, AND
21 IN 2016, THE UNITED STATES ARMY ENLISTED A COLORADO FEMALE INTO
22 THE INFANTRY FOR THE FIRST TIME. IN 2020, GOVERNOR JARED POLIS
23 APPOINTED THE FIRST FEMALE ADJUTANT GENERAL OF COLORADO.

24 (c) THERE ARE CURRENTLY TWENTY-ONE STATES AND UNITED
25 STATES TERRITORIES THAT RECOGNIZE JUNE 12 AS A DAY TO RECOGNIZE
26 WOMEN VETERANS, INCLUDING ALASKA, CALIFORNIA, FLORIDA, HAWAII,
27 ILLINOIS, INDIANA, KENTUCKY, MARYLAND, MASSACHUSETTS,

1 MICHIGAN, MISSISSIPPI, NEBRASKA, NEW JERSEY, NEW YORK, OHIO,
2 OREGON, RHODE ISLAND, SOUTH CAROLINA, THE U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS,
3 UTAH, AND WISCONSIN;

4 (d) WOMEN VETERANS HAVE LONG FOUGHT FOR EQUAL
5 RECOGNITION OF THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE SAFETY AND SECURITY OF
6 OUR NATION;

7 (e) AFTER SERVICE, WOMEN VETERANS FACE HIGHER RATES OF
8 UNEMPLOYMENT AND HOMELESSNESS THAN THEIR MALE COUNTERPARTS;

9 (f) WOMEN VETERANS, ESPECIALLY THOSE WITH DEPENDENT
10 CHILDREN, FACE HIGHER RATES OF POVERTY THAN THEIR MALE
11 COUNTERPARTS;

12 (g) WOMEN VETERANS FACE RATES OF POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS
13 AS MUCH AS THREE TIMES HIGHER THAN THEIR MALE COUNTERPARTS;

14 (h) AS MANY AS ONE IN TWELVE WOMEN ARE SEXUALLY
15 ASSAULTED WHILE ON ACTIVE DUTY;

16 (i) WOMEN VETERANS DIE BY SUICIDE AT SIX TIMES THE RATE OF
17 THEIR CIVILIAN COUNTERPARTS;

18 (j) DESPITE THE DISPROPORTIONATE IMPACTS THAT MILITARY
19 SERVICE HAS HAD ON THE WOMEN WHO SERVED, THEIR NEEDS HAVE YET
20 TO BE FULLY RECOGNIZED BY NATIONAL, STATE, AND LOCAL VETERANS
21 SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS;

22 (k) WOMEN VETERANS CONTINUE TO BE DENIED ACCESS TO
23 SERVICES OTHERWISE AVAILABLE TO THEIR MALE COUNTERPARTS,
24 INCLUDING ACCESS TO SHELTERS THAT ACCOMMODATE WOMEN OR THEIR
25 DEPENDENT CHILDREN, REPRODUCTIVE AND OTHER HEALTH CARE
26 SERVICES, MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES SPECIALIZING IN SEXUAL TRAUMA,
27 AND OTHER RESOURCES THAT RECOGNIZE THE CHALLENGES FACED BY

1 WOMEN VETERANS;

2 (l) DESPITE THESE SOMETIMES OVERWHELMING CHALLENGES,
3 WOMEN CONTINUE TO VOLUNTEER TO SERVE AND ARE THE FASTEST
4 GROWING SEGMENT OF UNITED STATES MILITARY AND VETERAN
5 POPULATIONS; AND

6 (m) IN ORDER TO HONOR THE COURAGE AND SACRIFICE OF WOMEN
7 VETERANS, BRING ATTENTION TO THE UNIQUE CHALLENGES THEY FACE,
8 AND AFFIRM THE STATE OF COLORADO'S COMMITMENT TO MEETING THE
9 NEEDS OF OUR WOMEN VETERANS AND THEIR FAMILIES, THE GENERAL
10 ASSEMBLY FINDS IT NECESSARY TO ESTABLISH A WOMEN VETERANS
11 APPRECIATION DAY, AND THIS DAY SHALL BE USED NOT ONLY AS AN
12 OCCASION TO HONOR THEIR SERVICE, BUT AS AN ANNUAL CALL TO
13 VETERANS ORGANIZATIONS STATEWIDE TO REVIEW THEIR PROGRAMS AND
14 WORK TOWARDS IMPROVING OUTCOMES FOR WOMEN VETERANS.

15 (2) THE TWELFTH DAY OF JUNE IN EACH YEAR IS KNOWN AS
16 "WOMEN VETERANS APPRECIATION DAY", AND APPROPRIATE
17 OBSERVANCE MAY BE HELD BY THE PUBLIC AND IN ALL PUBLIC SCHOOLS
18 OF THE STATE IN TRIBUTE TO THE SERVICE AND SACRIFICE OF WOMEN
19 VETERANS.

20 **SECTION 2. Act subject to petition - effective date.** This act
21 takes effect at 12:01 a.m. on the day following the expiration of the
22 ninety-day period after final adjournment of the general assembly; except
23 that, if a referendum petition is filed pursuant to section 1 (3) of article V
24 of the state constitution against this act or an item, section, or part of this
25 act within such period, then the act, item, section, or part will not take
26 effect unless approved by the people at the general election to be held in

1 November 2024 and, in such case, will take effect on the date of the
2 official declaration of the vote thereon by the governor.