

**MILITARY
WOMEN'S
COALITION**

UNITING SERVICEWOMEN:
PAST, PRESENT & FUTURE

September 24, 2020

The Honorable Adam Smith
Chair, House Armed Services Committee
2264 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mac Thornberry
Ranking Member, House Armed Services Committee
2208 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Re: The Military Women's Coalition supports the I am Vanessa Guillen Act

Dear Chairman Smith and Ranking Member Thornberry,

The Military Women's Coalition (MWC), representing over 1.6 million current and former servicemembers, veterans, their families and survivors, strongly recommends that you pass the I Am Vanessa Guillen Act of 2020.

This ground-breaking legislation addresses many of the challenges faced by military personnel confronted with work place sexual harassment. It establishes a confidential reporting process away from the victim's chain of command and provides for investigators who are specifically trained in sexual harassment to ensure more balanced outcomes and troop safety. Furthermore, it ensures that each Service will have its own Chief Prosecutor for cases of sexual harassment and sexual assault.

After the July 29, 2020 Congressional Hearing on Sexual Harassment in the Military Hearing in July, where so many questions went unanswered by the most senior SHARP leaders, it is gratifying to see key components of this bill demanding investigation into SHARP's programs, processes and leadership. For decades senior defense leaders have said that they are best positioned to root out sexual harassment and assault in the ranks while their own data shows an increasing problem with declining prosecutions and convictions.

Furthermore, investigating DoD processes and procedures for dealing with missing servicemembers is long overdue as so many families have been left waiting for answers for far too long. Finally, the ability for sexually harassed and assaulted service members to exact monetary judgment through a Federal Tort process has been sought for decades.

The Military Women's Coalition is profoundly appreciative of the lightning speed with which this legislative effort and its companion bill in the Senate were constructed and will do our best to assist in its passage.

The MWC, as represented by the organizations listed below, appreciates your leadership and your commitment to America's military and veterans. Please support this legislation and ensure it is incorporated into the NDAA. We look forward to working with you to move this bill forward. If you have questions about our support please email mwc@servicewomen.org or call 202-798-5570.

Sincerely,

Paige Jenkins
Chair, The Military Women's Coalition

MilitaryWomensCoalition.org
441 4th Street NW, Suite 707N
Washington, DC 20001

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Coalition Members

Circle of Arms
Combat Female Veterans Families United
GA Military Women
Invisible Combat
Lady Veterans Connect
Lambda Beta Alpha Military Sorority
Melwood Veteran Services
NJ SOS Veteran Stakeholders
Northeast Florida Women Veterans
Our Sisters' Keeper
Patriot Conceptions
Protect Our Defenders
Pink Berets
Red Feather Ranch
ReInVentU
San Diego Women Veterans Network
Service Women's Action Network
Service: Women Who Serve
Sisterhood of Military Women
Tennis Serving Vets
Veterans First, LTC
Veteran Women Enterprise Center
WINC: For All Women Veterans
Women in Military Service For America Memorial Foundation, Inc
Women Veterans of West Texas
Women Veterans Alliance
Women Veterans Social Justice Network

The MWC is a national group of formal and informal organizations who work collaboratively to serve and support US active duty, Guard, reserve, Veteran and retired service women by uniting and elevating their voices to influence policy and improve their well-being. Collectively, the MWC represents over 1.6 million members and supporters. Our vision is that someday military women are fully integrated, equally respected and equally supported members of the military and veteran community and their contributions are recognized as essential to national defense.

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