

## 2017-K1264

Assembly Resolution No. 1264

BY: M. of A. Rules (Hunter)

URGING the New York State Congressional delegation to pass the peer support counseling program for women veterans, H.R. 4635/S.2402

WHEREAS, The federal legislation to provide peer support counseling program for women veterans would direct the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to ensure that the veterans peer counseling program includes a sufficient number of peer counselors for women veterans; and

WHEREAS, The counselors may be VA employees and may have the expertise in (1) gender-specific issues and services, (2) VA services and benefits, and (3) employment mentoring; and

WHEREAS, Under this federal measure the VA would be required to (1) emphasize facilitating peer-to-peer for women veterans who suffered from sexual trauma while in the Armed Forces, have post-traumatic stress disorder or suffer from another mental health condition, or are otherwise at risk of becoming homeless; (2) conduct program research; and (3) coordinate with community organizations, state and local governments, institutions of higher education, local business organizations, and legal organizations; and

WHEREAS, Research has shown that women exposed to combat or military sexual trauma react differently than their male counterparts; female

veterans commit suicide at nearly six times the rate of other women; and

WHEREAS, A 2014 report by the Disabled American Veterans (DVA) found serious gaps in every aspect of programs that serve women veterans including health care, employment, finance, housing, social issues and the eradication of sexual assault; and

WHEREAS, There is indications that women veterans may lack access to valuable peer support opportunities once they are separated from military service to civilian life, which can lead to increase in mental and physical health problems; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the New York State Congressional delegation be and hereby is respectfully memorialized by this Legislative Body to pass legislation to expand access to peer counseling for female veterans within the VA system, H.R. 4635/S.2402; and be it further

RESOLVED, The copies of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to each member of the Congressional delegation from the State of New York.