

1 **JOINT RESOLUTION ON MILITARY SEXUAL TRAUMA**

2 2021 GENERAL SESSION

3 STATE OF UTAH

4 **Chief Sponsor: Angela Romero**

5 Senate Sponsor: Luz Escamilla

7 **LONG TITLE**

8 **General Description:**

9 This resolution designates November 2021 as "Military Sexual Assault Survivors
10 Month."

11 **Highlighted Provisions:**

12 This resolution:

- 13 ▶ provides an overview of military sexual trauma statistics;
- 14 ▶ designates November 2021 as "Military Sexual Assault Survivors Month" in Utah;

15 and

16 ▶ honors the strength, resolve, and perseverance of sexual assault survivors serving in
17 the military.

18 **Special Clauses:**

19 None

21 *Be it resolved by the Legislature of the state of Utah:*

22 WHEREAS, the United States Department of Defense's 2020 Annual Report on Sexual
23 Assault in the Military (DOD report) revealed that an estimated 20,500 members of the United
24 States Armed Forces, comprised of 13,000 women and 7,500 men, were victims of sexual
25 assault in 2019, with 7,825 cases reported, which is a 3% increase over 2018;

26 WHEREAS, on average, according to the same 2020 report, only one out of every three
27 sexual assault survivors in the armed forces come forward to report the assault;

28 WHEREAS, significant psychological impact due to the assault and resulting trauma
29 may cause survivors to leave military service early;

30 WHEREAS, women, who make up 20% of the armed forces, are the targets of 63% of
31 sexual assaults within the armed services;

32 WHEREAS, sexual assault within the armed forces is an issue for men who serve as
33 well, with 1 in 12 who report sexual harassment experiencing sexual assault;

34 WHEREAS, according to statistics cited in the DOD report, since 2004 the United
35 States Armed Forces has received 50,071 reports of sexual assault from male and female
36 service members for incidents that occurred during military service;

37 WHEREAS, sexual assault survivors in the armed forces have many of the same
38 reasons for deciding not to report sexual assault as sexual assault survivors outside of the
39 armed forces, including embarrassment, stigma, and fear of retaliation;

40 WHEREAS, according to the DOD report, sexual assault is a serious problem that can
41 have lasting, harmful effects on victims, military units, and international alliances;

42 WHEREAS, the unique pressures of military life cause additional anxiety and stress to
43 military sexual assault survivors and can often cause complications in survivors' lives;

44 WHEREAS, each service member's and veteran's personal story underscores the need
45 for meaningful change to provide healing to those affected by sexual trauma through adequate
46 medical and mental health services;

47 WHEREAS, it is clear that much more must be done to combat sexual assault in the
48 armed forces;

49 WHEREAS, by highlighting this epidemic, Utah policymakers can seek to bring about
50 improved educational and preventative initiatives at a state level; and

51 WHEREAS, in the state of Utah, the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs, local
52 veterans' centers, and VA medical centers are able to offer resources for those individuals that
53 have survived sexual trauma in the military;

54 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of the state of Utah
55 designates November 2021 as "Military Sexual Assault Survivors Month" in Utah.

56 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature honor the strength, resolve, and
57 perseverance of sexual assault survivors within the military and work urgently to end sexual

58 violence in the United States Armed Forces.

59 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature recognize the efforts of the
60 Department of Defense to acknowledge the issue of sexual assault in the military and to
61 support those who have been victims of sexual assault.