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Statewide Survey on Women Veterans Prompts New Coalition to Support Female Veterans

SACRAMENTO – The California State Library has formed a coalition with the California Department of Veterans Affairs (CalVet) and the California Commission on the Status of Women and Girls with the goal of connecting women veterans to their state and federal benefits and local veterans service organizations. The partnership was prompted by findings of a recent survey about the needs of California women veterans, including that many programs available to veterans are unfamiliar to women and as a consequence go underutilized.

The statewide survey of more than 900 women veterans was conducted by the California Research Bureau (CRB) of the State Library and is believed to be the first of its kind by any state. The survey was requested by CalVet and the Commission.

CRB is releasing today five briefs that highlight data from the survey indicating that California's women veterans experience levels of unemployment, military sexual trauma and mental health concerns at rates higher than reported by national sources. Despite a wide range of available services, the survey found that many women veterans are unaware of the services or unsure how to tap into them.

The members of the coalition are committed to taking concrete steps in the coming year to improve the lives of women veterans. The State Library and CRB will support the outreach and education efforts of CalVet and the Commission with substantive research about women veterans and the key issues they face. "This partnership is a wonderful way to create information, understanding and services that support our amazing female veterans who have served our country," said State Librarian Stacey Aldrich.

"Our survey breaks new ground by asking women veterans about their needs and experiences." stated Brian R. Sala, Acting Director of CRB. "The partnership is a great opportunity for us to share this information with other agencies."

Links to all five briefs follow:

California's Women Veterans and Military Sexual Trauma: <http://www.library.ca.gov/crb/12/S-12-004.pdf>

California Women Veterans and Mental Health: <http://www.library.ca.gov/crb/12/S-12-005.pdf>

California Women Veterans and Employment: <http://www.library.ca.gov/crb/12/S-12-007.pdf>

California Women Veterans' Benefit Utilization: <http://www.library.ca.gov/crb/12/S-12-008.pdf>

California Women Veterans At A Glance: <http://www.library.ca.gov/crb/12/S-12-009.pdf>

About the California State Library: Founded in 1850, the California State Library is the central reference and research library for the Governor's office, Legislature, state employees, and the general public. The State Library administers federal and state grants for programs in historical preservation, library construction, civil liberties education, literacy, volunteering, and broadband connectivity in public libraries. For more information, visit www.library.ca.gov .

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