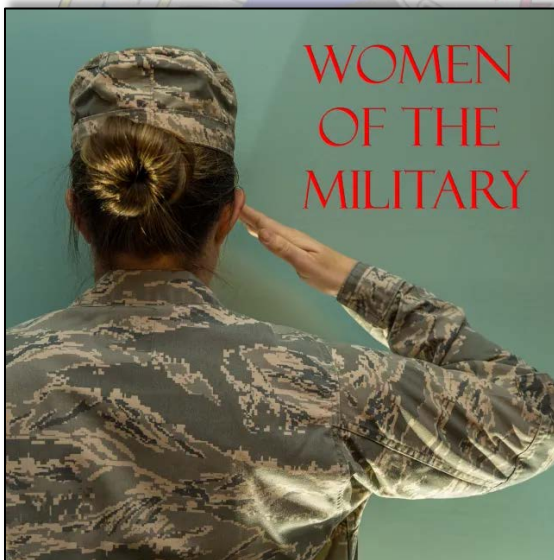


# Selective Service and Women

The first and foremost question that should be answered is “Should women be allowed in the military?” My answer to this is a categorical, unambiguous, and unequivocal, resounding **YES!** In my many years of experience, I have had the distinct pleasure of working with some women that I have admired as Marine Corps Officers. They not only embodied the “Esprit de Corp” of the Marine Corps but were able to confidently handle themselves in some extreme circumstances. Now it is not to say that all women are as capable as the ones I am speaking about, but neither are all the men.



This is not to say that the qualifications to serve in a particular role, field or occupational specialty should be altered in order to accommodate women or for that matter a particular group or sub-group. The qualifications and standards should be set and anyone who wishes to be in that field will have to meet those qualifications with no exceptions. So, let's say a field in the military requires the lifting of 50 pounds. Everyone who is in that field must be able to lift 50 pounds and that qualification would not be altered so that someone could be in that field unable to lift the 50 pounds.

While women officers and enlisted personnel have served with distinction in the U.S. Armed Forces, women have never been subject to Selective Service registration or a military draft in America. Those women who served in the past and those who serve today in ever increasing numbers all volunteered for military service.

According to current law, a man must register with Selective Service within 30 days of his 18th birthday. Selective Service accepts late registrations up until a man reaches his 26th birthday. Failure to register is a felony and non-registrants may be denied the following benefits for life:

- State-based student loans and grant programs
- Federal job training under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (formerly Workforce Investment Act)

- Federal (and many state and local) jobs
- Up to a 5-year delay of U.S. citizenship proceedings for immigrants



After America's draft ended in 1973, the Selective Service System was maintained in a standby status, just in case a return to conscription became necessary during a crisis. In 1975, men no longer had to register, and Selective Service was placed in "deep standby." But, in 1980, Selective Service Registration was reactivated for men in response to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and in reaction to reports that the standby Selective Service System might not meet wartime requirements for rapid manpower expansion of the active and reserve forces.

The exclusion of women from the registration process has been challenged in the courts. A lawsuit brought in 1980 resulted in a decision that the gender-based discrimination violated the due process clause of the Fifth Amendment but that decision was reversed by the U. S. Supreme Court and upheld the constitutionality of the exclusion based largely on the Department of Defense's policy that excluded women from combat. The Court reasoned that since the purpose of registration was to create a pool of potential inductees for combat, males and females could be treated differently.

Fast forward to several years ago, the nation proved they believe women are entirely equal to men in regard to military matters and females were cleared to serve in front line combat units and virtually all roles within the Armed Services. This was a win for women's lib groups, who have for decades been crying "equal rights".

Now that females also serve in combat units, it only makes sense to open Selective service to females. The Supreme Court ruling no longer applies but the Selective Service Act would have to be modified by Congress and signed into law by the President. After all, equal is equal. One cannot, or should not be able to, pick and choose what makes them equal. In other words, equality means that you take the good with the "bad". Equal means equal in every aspect.



Although I do not foresee the military draft being reinstated anytime soon, there is an overwhelming consensus in the federal government that the threat to America's national security is a reality. Whether it be from China, Russia, Iran or North Korea, there is a high probability of threats or a conflict. To deter and overcome these threats, the U.S. Armed Services and America's men and women in uniform must have the resources they need to keep the nation safe. The Selective Service System ensures operational readiness in a fair and equitable manner.



So, I say again with an emphatic **YES**. Women belong in the military and women should be required to register with the Selective Service just like their male counterparts.

**America! What a great place to live.**

*Thanks, Semper Fi, and Stay Safe !*

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