

VFW Commemorates the 75th Anniversary of the Women's Armed Services Integration Act

Military service in the regular Army, Marine Corps, Navy and Air Force officially opened to women on June 12, 1948

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WASHINGTON — The Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) commemorates the 75th anniversary of the signing of the Women's Armed Services Integration Act of 1948, officially opening regular military service to all women.

Since the American Revolution, American women served during times of war. Albeit in a limited capacity, women traveled with and supported the Continental Army in the War of Independence. Women served with distinction as nurses for the Union Army in the Civil War, leading to the establishment of the U.S. Army Nurse Corps in 1901. During WWI, women were allowed to serve openly in the military, backfilling clerical positions in the states and deploying to France in non-combat roles such as nurses and telephone switchboard operators. During WWII, all branches of service enlisted women into non-combat roles as the need for service members was unprecedented. By the end of the war, almost 350,000 women served in the military, proving just how vital women were to the effort. It was then that Army leaders began to request that the Women's Army Corps become a permanent part of the Army.

In July of 1947, Congress introduced the Women's Armed Services Integration Act and passed the bill the following year. On June 12, 1948, President Harry S. Truman signed the bill into law, granting women the right to serve as regular, permanent members of the Armed Services for the first time. The law would establish the Women's Army Corps as part of the Regular Army and authorize the enlistment and appointment of women in the Regular Navy, Marine Corps, Naval and Marine Corps Reserve, and the newly formed Air Force. While it would take another 25 years before women were integrated into the active Coast Guard and 65 years before all combat roles were open to women, the Women's Armed

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Services Integration Act of 1948 was the first step in giving women the opportunity to serve their country in any capacity. The 2023 White House statement on the 75th anniversary of Women's Integration in to the Armed Forces can be found [here](#).

The 1.5 million members of the VFW and its Auxiliary salute all women veterans, past, present and future, and say "thank you" for your service to our great nation.