



Center for Military Readiness



Promoting high standards and sound priorities for our military men and women.

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Selective Service Registration of Women for Draft and Push for National Service Have No Place in the Senate Defense Bill

During a May 19 **Senate Armed Services Committee** session marking-up the Senate version of the **National Defense Authorization Act for 2017 (NDAA - SR 2814)**, Chairman **John McCain** (R-AZ) successfully proposed legislation to register women for **Selective Service** and a possible future draft. Sen. McCain also proposed a **Commission on Military, National, and Public Service**, to look for additional ways for government officials and politically-correct organizations to commandeer young people's lives.

These initiatives were sprung on the committee behind closed-doors and without prior notice or comprehensive hearings on the underlying paramount issue: *Whether women should be ordered into direct ground combat units that fight the enemy with deliberate offensive action.*

Sen. Mike Lee (R-UT) offered an amendment to strike the McCain language, but it was defeated in committee with the help of [seven Republican colleagues](#). Sen. Lee resolved to attempt removal of the McCain language again when the full Senate takes up the NDAA on the floor, probably before **Memorial Day**.

The Center for Military Readiness strongly objects to both of the McCain measures for reasons highlighted in this **two-page summary**:

[Senate Should Remove from NDAA: Selective Service Registration of Women for Draft and Push for National Service](#)

The following CMR Policy Analysis provides in-depth historic perspective on the Selective Service issue, including the importance of building a full record on reasons why minimally-

qualified military should not be forced to register for Selective Service or ordered into the combat arms:

CMR Policy Analysis: [Women, War, and Selective Service](#)

In a statement, **CMR President Elaine Donnelly** said:

“Legislation that would affect every young woman in America should not have been approved behind closed doors without prior notice or hearings on its consequences.

“This issue is not about women alone, even though they would be harmed the most. It is about **military readiness** in the face of future catastrophic threats that are beyond the capability of our severely-depleted **All-Volunteer Force**.

“Recent **Marine Corps** research findings, which the administration and Congress have ignored, confirmed unchanging physical differences between men and women that would make **direct ground combat arms units such as the infantry less strong, slower, and less lethal during missions to deliberately fight and kill the enemy**.

“Even though some exceptional women may be able to meet minimal standards, the fact remains that most women cannot meet combat arms standards while most men can.

“A Selective Service call-up based on myths of gender equality, rather than reality, would create a **political crisis and a paralyzing administrative overload that would weaken our armed forces during a time of extreme national emergency**.

“Jamming the induction system, instead of concentrating on men who can be rapidly trained to fight in physically-demanding ground combat units, would **weaken, not strengthen, military readiness at the worst possible time**.

“Women have always volunteered in times of national emergency and they will do so again. **There is no justification for ordering all women of draft age to register with Selective Service.**”

Prior to action in the Senate, senior **House Armed Services Committee Chairman “Mac” Thornberry** (R-TX) and **Rules Chairman Pete Sessions** (R-TX) responsibly [intervened](#) before the House rashly voted for legislation sponsored by **Rep. Duncan Hunter** (R-CA) titled **“Draft America’s Daughters.”**

The provocatively-named measure, which Hunter voted against himself, was added to the House committee’s draft of the **FY NDAA** with a narrow **32-30** roll-call vote. Six

Republicans and all but one Democrat casually voted to impose on young women **Selective Service** obligations, including a possible future draft.

The Senate is likely to vote on the NDAA in the coming week, **May 23-27**.

To arrange an interview with Elaine Donnelly, please call **734/464-9430**.

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