



# WOMEN VETERANS

Women are one of the fastest growing demographics in the veteran community, and they face unique challenges when transitioning from military to civilian status. In 2021, Wounded Warrior Project® (WWP) released the Women Warriors Initiative Report after a year of diverse engagements with nearly 5,000 female veterans to explore the challenges they face with transition, access to care, mental health, financial stress, and isolation. Our 2022 legislative priorities are informed by these findings. Congress must continue its efforts to ensure the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is meeting women veterans' needs.

## AN EXPANDING POPULATION

### More than 2 million women veterans

have served our country.<sup>§</sup> Women have comprised 30% of Veterans Health Administration growth over the last 5 years<sup>¶</sup> and all are potentially affected by gaps in care and services.

### 7 in 10 of women

responding to WWP's Annual Warrior Survey reported experiencing Military Sexual Trauma (MST).\*

\*2021 Annual Warrior Survey (AWS), <sup>§</sup>VA, <sup>¶</sup>VA FY22 Budget Proposal

### Nearly 1 in 3

### women warriors (30%)

identified "financial stress" as a top challenge during transition.<sup>†</sup>

### Only half (49%) of women warriors

agreed that VA was able to meet their needs after military service.<sup>†</sup>

<sup>†</sup>2020 Women Warriors Initiative (WWI) Report

## WWP EFFORTS TO SUPPORT WOMEN VETERANS

WWP's Peer Support Groups hosted by local warriors organize meetings across the country, connecting our Alumnae with a community of warriors right in their backyard. WWP supports 12 women-only peer support groups facilitated virtually, breaking down barriers to access and enabling connection despite distance.

In FY20, women were four times as likely to participate in advocacy opportunities, three times more likely to participate in financial education services, and two times more likely to participate in physical health and wellness programming than men.

In FY20, women warriors accounted for 43% of participants in WWP's virtual connection events, or more than double (2.5 times) their share of the warrior population.

## TAKE ACTION

## WWP ENCOURAGES CONGRESS TO:

- 1 Improve accessibility of women's health care by supporting legislation to expand and enhance VA's gender-specific services, including **H.R. 344**, the **Women Veterans TRUST Act**, and **H.R. 1957**, the **Veteran Infertility Treatment Act**.
- 2 **Enable greater economic opportunity** by strengthening social and financial support through programs that facilitate peer connection, mentorship, and professional networks.
- 3 **Enact greater coordination** across agencies and disciplines to improve awareness, accessibility, and quality of care for MST survivors.