

RESOLUTION TO THE NATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR WOMEN ON ENDING MILITARY DRAFT REGISTRATION

WHEREAS, the U.S. military has not fully addressed gender-based violence within its ranks, with 7,816 reports of sexual assault reported in FY2020, rendering potential conscription of people and putting them in harm's way against their will; and

WHEREAS, the activation of a draft would threaten the rights to bodily autonomy and individual choice of all people eligible to be drafted; and

WHEREAS, Selective Service registration continues to be required of all eligible in the U.S. within 30 days of their 18th birthday, despite historical opposition by Americans to the instatement of the draft; and

WHEREAS, harsh penalties are currently issued to those who refuse draft registration for reasons of conscience, which can include denial of employment with federal executive agencies, denial of citizenship to immigrants, and denial of access to state programs in some states including state jobs, state educational programs and funding, and even driver's licenses and state-issued non-driver IDs; and

WHEREAS, punishments issued to draft non-registrants could disproportionately affect those unaware of draft registration requirements, and draft exemptions or deferments may be more likely to go to those with the privileged backgrounds and resources to seek and obtain them (such as medical records and professional examinations and reports to support claims for medical exemptions); and

WHEREAS, a large number of U.S. women oppose mandatory registration for the U.S. military draft (52% of women according to a 2016 poll), and most Americans oppose a military draft (58% of Americans according to the same 2016 poll); and

WHEREAS, gender equality with respect to Selective Service could be achieved by ending Selective Service registration entirely; and

WHEREAS, compliance with the draft registration system is low, likely below 50%;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the National Organization for Women calls for an end to mandatory Selective Service registration in the United States, emphasizing voluntary service that would allow all people the right to choose for themselves whether they desire to serve in the military; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that it is recommended that NOW will include these recommendations in their lobbying of the U.S. Congress as appropriate, encouraging support for the Selective Service Repeal Act of 2021 – H.R. 2509 and S1139