



May 23, 2016

The Honorable John McCain
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator McCain,

As leaders in our universities and the future of our nation, the presidents of Young Women for America ask for your support of Sen. Mike Lee's amendment which would strike the provision within the National Defense Authorization Act that would expand the Military Selective Service requirements to female citizens ages 18-26. We are deeply patriotic, but obliging women to sign up for the draft is a disservice to our country. Should the United States reinstate the draft, women would need to continue serving our nation from the homeland. Women lead communities and run businesses, ensuring stability in our homes, economy, and government.

We strongly support the heroic, capable, and honorable women who chose and will choose to serve our country in the military. They play a vital role in our national defense. However, this issue centers around whether or not women our age are to be **forced** to register to serve in tip-of-spear combat roles should our nation reinstate the draft. Patriotic women throughout history have served our nation in a diverse range of roles both in the military and as civilians. Forcing us to serve in combat against our will is a deep departure in U.S. policy.

Our military's sole purpose is to protect our nation, not to serve as this administration's laboratory for social engineering. Peak childbearing years for women continue to be cited¹ at 20-35, an age range in line with the 18-26 age group affected by this policy that ignores basic biology. We firmly believe in the equality of men and women, but that does not require us to ignore the physical differences and unique risks to women in combat, particularly in the case of capture.

There are exceptional women who are capable of meeting or exceeding the combat standards put forth by each branch. We support them as we do all individuals willing to put their lives on the line for the greatest nation in the history of the world. However, the female draft discussion should revolve around combat readiness, efficiency, and national security, and weeding through applicants who are overwhelmingly biologically unable to meet combat standards would be a logistical nightmare and would force the lowering of combat standards. The capabilities of these rare women should not mean all appropriately aged women are involuntarily eligible for combat.



Perhaps the greatest threat to our national security is radical Islamic terrorism. Radical Islamists view women as less than men (1/4 in a court of law) and as property. The torture, repeated rape, and humiliation that would face female POWs would be unthinkable. Women who understand these risks and who bravely choose to serve regardless are different from women who are chosen to serve based on the day they were born.

Women are not clamoring for this “opportunity.” Only 15 percent of our active-duty military forces are women.² We find it demeaning to suggest that women who have instead chosen to serve our nation in other civilian roles — such as manufacturing, commerce, medicine or even caring for their children — are not contributing to our nation. They are indeed!

Finally, we are very proud of the many ways women serve our nation, including those who have chosen to do so in uniform, some of whom are friends and classmates. We strongly suggest that it is wrongheaded for the Senate to adopt the left’s view of equality which ignores facts in favor of feelings. We support and respect our peers’ choice to join the military, but unwaveringly oppose any compulsory registration. It is for these reasons we ask for your support of Sen. Lee’s amendment.

Sincerely,

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¹ “Best age for childbearing remains 20-35 - Delaying risks heartbreak, say experts,” *Medical News Today*, September 16, 2005, accessed at <http://www.medicalnewstoday.com/releases/30737.php>, May 18, 2016.

² “See Women’s Progress in the U.S. Military,” *Time Magazine*, September 8, 2015, accessed at <http://labs.time.com/story/women-in-military/> on May 18, 2016.