RESOLUTION 16–16

MILITARY SEXUAL TRAUMA (MST)

WHEREAS, the continued prevalence of military sexual assault continues to grow and has been the subject of numerous military reports, Congressional hearings, documentaries and media stories. MST is a heinous crime which is a disgrace to all of those who have ever worn the uniform of the Armed Services which must not be tolerated; and

WHEREAS, DoD and VA have made some progress towards developing and implementing a policy that creates a tangible, visible deterrent to perpetrators through consistent prosecutions or other severely negative consequences to one's military careers, both departments must commit to improving their Integrated Mental Health Strategy; and

WHEREAS, military sexual trauma (MST) victim services and legal support systems within DoD are broken and do not take the victim’s confidentiality or best interest in mind; and

WHEREAS, the American military is a highly respected, disciplined, honor-bound and committed institution the majority of whose members, of all ranks, are dedicated to living and upholding the core values of loyalty, respect, selfless service and personal courage, and

WHEREAS, the effects of untreated MST can be devastating to the overall health of veterans and in the successful transitioning back into their families and communities; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that AMVETS calls upon DoD to adopt a zero tolerance stance for MST and to enhance its MST awareness programs by mandating consistent, sufficient and continuing preventative training of all military personnel. AMVETS further calls upon VA to continually improve its MST treatment programs for all, military health- and mental healthcare providers and disseminating evidence-based clinical practice guidelines to clinicians who care for veterans who have suffered from MST; and be it further

RESOLVED, that AMVETS calls upon congress to continue its oversight and hearings related to military sexual trauma care and benefits with the goal of improving VA and DoD collaboration and improving policies and practices for military sexual trauma care and disability compensation.

SOURCE: Departments of AZ,ND,NJ,MO,VA,FL,IL,KY,AK,NM,MI,CA,MA,WA,IA,OH,TN