

SENATE MILITARY AND VETERANS' AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO SENATE, No. 4418

with committee amendments

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: OCTOBER 15, 2026

The Senate Military and Veterans' Affairs Committee reports favorably and with committee amendments Senate Bill No. 4418.

As amended by the committee, this bill revises portions of the law establishing the Commission on Women Veterans. The purpose of the revisions is to reestablish the commission with clearer authority, more defined roles, and stronger coordination.

As provided by the bill, to promote transparency, equity, and effectiveness, the public members will be nominated by a veteran organization through the Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA), and nominees will represent a diverse population spanning multiple eras of service, branches of military, racial and ethnic backgrounds, family structures, and service-connected experiences, ensuring that the commission reflects the broad and evolving needs of women veterans in the State. In addition, references to affiliation-based appointments to specific veteran service organizations have been removed to ensure nominations are based on lived experiences, leadership, and active engagement in the women veteran space.

As amended, the bill also provides that the commission members' shall not serve for more than two terms. The members will: participate in quarterly meetings and subcommittees, as appropriate; gather and evaluate organizational feedback; assist with Statewide outreach and listening sessions; and contribute to an annual State of Women Veterans report.

In addition, under the bill, the public meetings will be transcribed, and the transcripts will be prominently posted on the website of the DVA. The reports to the Legislature will also be prominently posted on the DVA's website.

The bill also repeals redundant sections of law regarding the Commission on Women Veterans, which remained in the statutes after the split of the former Department of Military and Veterans Affairs.

COMMITTEE AMENDMENTS:

The committee amended the bill to:

- 1) prohibit members of the Commission on Women Veterans from serving more than two terms;
- 2) require the commission to periodically advise the Commissioner of the Department of Veterans Affairs, rather than the Deputy Commissioner, on its activities, findings and recommendations; and
- 3) remove provisions of the bill establishing a review panel to assess nominations of prospective members to the commission.