

[VA Secretary Meets IAVA's Jaslow to Discuss Women Veterans](#)

WASHINGTON, DC (August 1, 2017) – Today, Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America Executive Director Allison Jaslow met with Dr. David Shulkin, Secretary of Veterans Affairs, at VA headquarters in Washington to discuss the urgent needs of women veterans, IAVA member experiences and policy recommendations. Jaslow, a two tour Iraq War veteran and the lead spokesperson for IAVA's historic She Who Borne the Battle campaign, reiterated IAVA's priority, our focus on passing the Deborah Sampson Act, changing the exclusionary VA motto and improving recognition and services for women veterans at VA.

"I'm grateful for Secretary Shulkin's interest in our top priority, women veterans. We appreciate the Secretary inviting us to discuss the need for reforms, including a culture that fully supports women veterans," **said Allison Jaslow.**

"I outlined, once again, why IAVA is advocating for increased recognition and improved services for women veterans. The Secretary agreed that it's essential to truly supporting all our veterans, to our national security, and shared important progress he feels the VA has made in recent years, like the care and condition of its Women's Centers," **said Allison Jaslow.** "Still, I asked Secretary Shulkin to publicly stand now with IAVA, a bipartisan coalition of 21 Senate sponsors, 37 House sponsors, and over 18 leading veterans groups to support the Deborah Sampson Act. And, to consider the steps he can take to fulfill the goals of the Deborah Sampson Act himself or in partnership with the President."

"Only 27% of IAVA women veterans feel the public treats women veterans with respect. We need to change the VA motto that alienates a growing percentage of our population, and once again I emphasized to the Secretary the imperative for him to do so," **continued Jaslow.**

She Who Borne The Battle: More than 345,000 American women have deployed since 9/11 and over 2.2 million women veterans live in the US total. Women are the fastest-growing segment of the veteran population and that trend will continue as the number of male veterans simultaneously declines over the next decades. However, many women veterans are left without recognition and the proper care to support their needs when they return from their service. She Who Borne the Battle will change this by providing a foundation of public awareness, local support and policy changes solely targeted at recognizing and supporting women veterans. This includes changing the exclusionary VA motto, "To care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow, and for his orphan," to a motto that represents "She Who Borne the Battle." Learn more at www.SheWhoBorneTheBattle.org.

The Deborah Sampson Act: In addition to asking Congress to support a change

to the VA's non inclusive motto, [The Deborah Sampson Act](#) addresses gender disparities at the VA to ensure that women veterans are getting equitable care. This bill will provide for enhanced access to VA care and will ensure women veterans are getting the benefits they have earned through their service. The bill is named after [Deborah Sampson](#), a veteran of the Revolutionary War, and one of the first known women who fought in uniform for this country. Sampson disguised herself as a man and joined the Patriot forces and was the only woman to earn a military pension for her participation in the fight for American independence.