



Military Wives, Former Spouses & Mothers Equal Benefits Protection Act

End the malicious disrespect and discrimination against military wives, former spouses and mothers who served faithfully, in my mother's case over 24 years.

Today, they are denied VA benefits as the law says, they are not current spouses but former spouses, divorced. And it does not matter how many years they were faithful military wives and mothers they are abandoned.

Ida O'Neil served as a faithful Marine Corps wife and mother for 24+ years, from 1953-1977. Separation in 1977 and divorced 1980. She bore and raised 3 children.

Capt. Donn L. O'Neil USMC, my father retired after 20 years of service Jan 1, 1970. He is a Korea and Vietnam veteran.

Compare and You Tell Me If this is Fair and Honorable

According to Veterans Affairs eligibility requirements, if a man serves for 90 days during a time of war, he receives benefits that include VA Aid and Attendance, VA Home Loan, and more.

If a woman married a soldier who was killed with less than 1 year of marriage, she also receives these benefits: VA Aid and Attendance, VA Home Loan, and more.

However, a faithful woman who serves as a wife and mother, raising her children alone while her husband is serving overseas, who is divorced after 24+ years of faithful marriage, she is denied these benefits: VA Aid and Attendance, VA Home Loan, and more.

My father was not faithful in his marriage. He committed adultery. Their marriage ended after 24 years.

My mother never remarried. My father remarried.

Both parents were hard workers. Dad went on to earn a Ph.D. and worked in the healthcare industry. My mom worked at the University of California, San Diego in contracts and grants for many years. To my understanding she held a security clearance, as some contracts were classified military research programs.

Many marriages struggle and do not survive war, so I am wondering why in the world this failure by the government, by the DoD/VA to be fair, to acknowledge the service of military wives and mothers whose marriages

ended after so many years and certainly could use these justifiable benefits given to others with far less service time.

This is a blatant injustice and needs to be corrected. These unjust laws governing military benefits need to be corrected.

All of us have a duty, a solemn responsibility to maintain the integrity of the chain of command.

It is a betrayal, a violation of common sense fairness and honor. It is a disgrace to forget and with malicious disrespect abandon women who served our country as military wives and mothers, in this case over 24 years.

It is a clear violation of the integrity of the chain of command, denying military wives and mothers just and fair benefits for their years of service.

We don't abandon our soldiers, why in the world do we abandon our military wives, these mothers who faithfully served our country.

On Veterans Day we say thank you to those who wore the uniform, but not the military wives and mothers who also wore the uniform of faithful duty and sacrifice.

I have met with government bureaucrats and politicians who will not concede this situation is wholly unjust and a blatant discriminatory act against women.

Our military wives and mothers had a role, had a duty and did their duty. There are those in the system, the bureaucrats and politicians that say, "What, we'd have to pass new law/regulations." Imagine that, our congress actually doing their jobs.

"The only way your mother would possibly be able to qualify for a VA home loan in the future is if Congress agreed to pass new law/regulations." Yes, I have received this callous excuse from congressional staff: Kathleen McGavran, Office of Congressman Ken Calvert (CA-42) on August 20, 2015.

When will our law makers put a stop to this ongoing malevolence against former military spouses, these women who serve our country and raise our children? I call upon faithful and just men and women to recognize and correct this injustice.

Former spouses, a divorce, should not be treated differently, especially after so many years of faithful service as a military wife and mother. Again, only 90 days of service in time of war and these benefits are granted to an individual, but not Aid and Attendance or VA Home Loan for 24 years of service to those who served our country as military wives and mothers.

And my response to these bureaucrats who say she is not a veteran, I argue she is a veteran, a veteran military wife and mother who did her job.

These women should not be discriminated against, and they are blatantly being discriminated against by our law makers and a callous government bureaucracy. They refuse to do what is right, they refuse to maintain justice for all, or lift a finger to correct this injustice, willfully violating the integrity of the chain of command.

Join me, her son and advocate, fight for these women who served our country and end the discrimination and injustice against military wives and mothers.

Respectfully,

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