



IRAQ VETERANS AGAINST THE WAR



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Resolution on Expansion of Veteran Treatment Courts

Whereas, the nature of military service and the high rates of deployment to combat zones including Iraq and Afghanistan have left a growing number of veterans with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, Traumatic Brain Injury, and Military Sexual Trauma;

Whereas, untreated trauma can lead to substance abuse, suicide, unemployment, homelessness, criminal behavior, and involvement in the criminal justice system;

Whereas, Veterans Treatment Courts offer veterans mental health counseling, drug treatment, veteran mentorship and regular court appearances for veterans diagnosed with mental health disorders or substance abuse in order to reduce recidivism, avoid the life-long stigma of felony convictions, and reintegrate into their communities;

Whereas, most Veterans Treatment Courts are only available to veterans who have been charged with non-violent felonies or misdemeanors without consideration of how military trauma may be a factor in violent offenses;

Whereas, veterans who are accused of violent crimes may also benefit from the rehabilitation, treatment, and peer-support offered by Veterans Treatment Courts thereby offering these veterans a path to heal from trauma, reengage positively in their communities and families, and avoid a life-long cycle of incarceration;

Therefore, let it be resolved that Iraq Veterans Against the War supports the expansion of Veterans Treatment Courts to be an option for all veterans with diagnosed mental health disorders and/or substance abuse regardless of the nature of the charges against them.

Adopted: January 23, 2015