



Loree Sutton, MD
COMMISSIONER

Jeffrey Roth
DEPUTY COMMISSIONER

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to express my strong support for renaming the Manhattan VA Medical Center, located at 423 E23rd Street, New York, NY 10010, to the Margaret Corbin VA Medical Center to honor the first American woman to be officially recognized to “take a soldier’s part in combat” during the Revolutionary War in 1776. Since the inception of our nation, women have served – whether by fighting on the battlefield themselves or by providing essential assistance that made it possible for others to do so. Margaret Corbin exemplifies the spirit of service that will inspire future generations of women to similarly serve their country. It is only fitting that we honor her service and sacrifice – and, indeed, the contributions of all women service members and veterans – with the renaming of one of our nation’s most essential institutions dedicated to veterans’ care: the VA.

As a proud New Yorker who served for almost thirty years in uniform in the United States Army, I am particularly supportive of choosing a VA medical center in Manhattan to be the very first VA in the country to bear a woman service members’ name. With over 200,000 women serving on active duty in the United States military today, recognizing not only their service but the service of all of the women who served in generations before them sends a powerful message to all our citizens that our country values and honors all service members’ dedication to our nation.

As President Harry S Truman said, “Our debt to the heroic men and valiant women in the service of our country can never be repaid. They have earned our undying gratitude. America can never forget their sacrifices.” While we cannot repay the debt of our service women in uniform, we can honor their sacrifices. This act will be an important step in doing so, sending a powerful message of gratitude to all women who have worn the uniform, today and throughout the history of our great nation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "L. Sutton".

Loree Sutton, MD
Brigadier General, US Army (ret.)
Commissioner



United Spinal Association

July 1, 2019

The Honorable Johnny Isakson
Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs
Russell Senate Building – Room 412
Washington, D.C. 20510-6050

The Honorable Jon Tester
Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs
Russell Senate Building – Room 412
Washington, D.C. 20510-6050

Dear Chairman Isakson and Ranking Member Tester:

We write today to express the support of VetsFirst and United Spinal Association for S. 898: A bill to designate the Manhattan Campus of the New York Harbor Health Care System of the Department of Veterans Affairs as the “Margaret Cochran Corbin Campus of the New York Harbor Health Care System” and the companion legislation, H.R. 1925 introduced in the US House of Representatives.

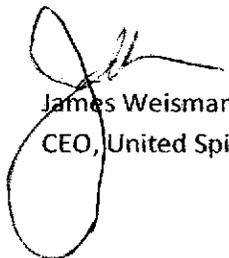
No VA Medical Center in the country currently bears the name of a female veteran, and we can think of no better way to enshrine Margaret Cochran Corbin, the first female Revolutionary War combat veteran from New York than to designate a VA Medical Center be named in her honor.

United Spinal Association worked diligently to have the Bronx VA Medical Center renamed to honor one of our longstanding executives, James J. Peters, a disabled veteran with a spinal cord injury. By prominently invoking the powerful legacy of our nation's heroes, we highlight the achievements of those who paved the way for the veterans who came after them, upholding the standards set—and breakthroughs made—by their actions. Just as Jim Peters opened doors for veterans with spinal cord injuries at the VA, we believe that renaming the Manhattan VAMC for Margaret Corbin will aid in bringing women veterans to access the benefits and services they've earned through the VA.

As the female veteran population continues to grow, acknowledging the longstanding contributions of women to the country's armed forces in a visible and meaningful manner will promote the inclusion of all and encourage future generations to serve. It will convey to women veterans everywhere that all veterans shall receive equal and equitable access to care and benefits at their VA.

VetsFirst and United Spinal Association are proud to support S. 898 and H.R. 1925 as well as all opportunities to increase awareness, engagement, and assistance for all Veterans.

Sincerely,



James Weisman
CEO, United Spinal Association



Danielle Applegate
Vice President, VetsFirst



IRAQ AND AFGHANISTAN
VETERANS OF AMERICA

June 4, 2019

The Honorable Kirsten Gillibrand
United States Senate
Washington, DC

The Honorable Carolyn Maloney
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC

Dear Sen. Gillibrand and Rep. Maloney:

On behalf of Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America's (IAVA) 425,000 members, I would like to applaud you for introducing your legislation (S. 898 / H.R. 1925) to designate the Manhattan Campus of the New York Harbor Health Care System of the Department of Veterans Affairs as the "Margaret Cochran Corbin Campus of the New York Harbor Health Care System".

As you very well know, this would be the first VA hospital to be named for a woman veteran, signaling a major shift in VA culture locally and nationally to more appropriately recognize and serve women veterans. This is consistent with IAVA's own landmark "She Who Borne The Battle" campaign to recognize the service of, and fill gaps in care for, women veterans.

Although it has been almost 250 years since the first woman veteran received her earned benefits from the United States, women veterans are still fighting for recognition and appropriate care in a nation they have served in uniform. Your legislation to rename the Manhattan VA facility is another welcome step in a larger campaign for recognition.

Again, thank you for introducing your thoughtful and timely legislation. Please let me know how we can assist you with this and other legislation you champion to improve the lives of our veterans and servicemembers.

Sincerely,

Jeremy Butler
Chief Executive Officer
Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America (IAVA)



New York City Veterans Alliance
118 W 22nd St
New York, NY 10011

November 15, 2018

Dear Ms. Rouse,

Women constitute approximately 15% of active duty service members, 20% of new recruits, and 19% of reserves. Over 345,000 women have deployed since September 11, 2001.

The VA's motto reads, "To care for *him* who shall have borne the battle, and for *his* widow, and for *his* orphan." Yet *women* are the fastest growing veteran population, with 2.2 million women veterans representing every branch of the military.

In 2017, the New York Legal Assistance Group opened the nation's first legal clinics to exclusively serve women veterans, held at the Manhattan VA Medical Center. In doing so, NYLAG hoped to help shift the VA's male-dominated atmosphere. A recent Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America study of women veterans found that fewer than half believed that VA staff treated women veterans with respect or provided a culture welcoming to women.

New York can play an important role in leading this culture shift by renaming the Manhattan VA after Margaret Corbin, the first female veteran to receive a military pension after becoming disabled from injuries sustained in combat in 1776. It will be the first VA hospital in the country to be named after a female veteran and will signal the VA's commitment to recognizing the importance and contributions of women veterans.

Sincerely,

Beth Goldman
Executive Director
New York Legal Assistance Group