

117TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. 5016

AN ACT

To designate the medical center of the Department of Veterans Affairs located in Anchorage, Alaska, as the “Colonel Mary Louise Rasmuson Campus of the Alaska VA Healthcare System”, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

1 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

2 This Act may be cited as the “Colonel Mary Louise
3 Rasmuson Campus of the Alaska VA Healthcare System
4 Act of 2022”.

5 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

6 Congress finds the following:

7 (1) Mary Louise (Milligan) Rasmuson was born
8 April 11, 1911, in East Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

9 (2) Mary Louise received a Bachelor of Science
10 degree from the Carnegie Institute of Technology
11 and a Master of Education degree from the Univer-
12 sity of Pittsburgh.

13 (3) Mary Louise was one of the first two
14 women to receive an Honorary Doctorate of Laws
15 degree from the Carnegie Institute of Technology.

16 (4) In 1942, Mary Louise joined the Women’s
17 Army Auxiliary Corps as a Private and was in the
18 first graduating class.

19 (5) Mary Louise worked up the ranks, and in
20 1957, President Dwight Eisenhower appointed Mary
21 Louise as the Fifth Director of the Women’s Army
22 Corps and she was reappointed to this position by
23 President John F. Kennedy in 1961.

24 (6) In 1962, Colonel Rasmuson retired from the
25 Army.

1 (7) Colonel Rasmuson was recognized for her
2 outstanding service in the Women's Army Corps
3 with the Legion of Merit award with two Oak Leaf
4 Clusters for her work in expanding the roles and du-
5 ties of women in the Army, as well as her role in
6 integrating Black women in the Women's Army
7 Corps.

8 (8) Colonel Rasmuson became Director of the
9 Women's Army Corps during tumultuous times and
10 is credited with enhancing the image and recruit-
11 ment of women into the Women's Army Corps dur-
12 ing her years as the Director.

13 (9) Colonel Rasmuson expanded opportunities
14 for women to serve in assignments previously re-
15 served only for men, starting with the assignments
16 of 12 enlisted women into the First Missile Master
17 Unit at Fort Meade, Maryland.

18 (10) Colonel Rasmuson was instrumental in en-
19 abling women to be promoted above the grade of E-
20 7 into the highest enlisted ranks of the Army, E-8
21 and E-9.

22 (11) During her time in the Women's Army
23 Corps, Colonel Rasmuson was the guiding force be-
24 hind the Army opening up the college enlistment op-
25 tion to women under the self-enhancement programs

1 and witnessed the first female enlisted member at-
2 tend college under those programs.

3 (12) The career of Colonel Rasmuson also laid
4 the groundwork for women to be fully integrated
5 into the United States Army when the Women's
6 Army Corps was disbanded in 1978.

7 (13) In 1961, Mary Louise married a promi-
8 nent leader in Alaska, Elmer E. Rasmuson, and she
9 was the first Director of the Women's Army Corps
10 to be married while serving in that position.

11 (14) After her retirement from military service
12 in 1962, Mary Louise moved to Alaska where she
13 continued her leadership as a veteran in her commu-
14 nity in Alaska.

15 (15) Mary Louise served as First Lady of An-
16 chorage after the devastating magnitude 9.2 earth-
17 quake in 1964, after her husband, Elmer, was elect-
18 ed as mayor, serving from 1964 to 1967.

19 (16) Mary Louise was an advocate of social jus-
20 tice, education, and the arts during her 45 years of
21 work on the Board of the Rasmuson Foundation.

22 (17) Mary Louise served as the Honorary Chair
23 and was a major founder to renovate the Anchorage
24 Veterans Memorial on the Delaney Parkstrip in
25 downtown Anchorage.

1 (18) Mary Louise also contributed to the Army
2 Women’s Museum, the National Museum of the
3 American Indian, and the National Museum of the
4 United States Army.

5 (19) Mary Louise was the Chair of the Anchor-
6 age Museum Foundation and helped establish the
7 museum in Anchorage, serving as its Chair for 21
8 years.

9 (20) On July 30, 2012, Mary Louise died at
10 her home in Anchorage, at the age of 101, but her
11 legacy of character and leadership will endure as an
12 example to all who serve in the United States mili-
13 tary.

14 **SEC. 3. DESIGNATION OF COLONEL MARY LOUISE**
15 **RASMUSON CAMPUS OF THE ALASKA VA**
16 **HEALTHCARE SYSTEM.**

17 (a) DESIGNATION.—The medical center of the De-
18 partment of Veterans Affairs in Anchorage, Alaska, shall,
19 after the date of the enactment of this Act, be known and
20 designated as the “Colonel Mary Louise Rasmuson Cam-
21 pus of the Alaska VA Healthcare System”.

22 (b) REFERENCE.—Any reference in any law, regula-
23 tion, map, document, paper, or other record of the United
24 States to the medical center referred to in subsection (a)
25 shall be considered to be a reference to the Colonel Mary

- 1 Louise Rasmuson Campus of the Alaska VA Healthcare
- 2 System.

Passed the Senate December 6, 2022.

Attest:

Secretary.

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