ON THE ESTABLISHMENT OF VETERANS TREATMENT COURTS

WHEREAS, when veterans return from combat, some turn to drugs or alcohol to cope with mental health issues such as Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and/or Traumatic Brain Injury and sadly end up in the criminal justice system; **and**

WHEREAS, Veterans Treatment Courts are hybrid Drug Courts and Mental Health Courts and have evolved out of the growing need for a treatment court model designed specifically for justice-involved veterans to maximize efficiency and economize resources while making use of the distinct military culture consistent among veterans; **and**

WHEREAS, many veterans have access to exclusive economic benefits and health services through the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, State Departments of Veterans Affairs, County Departments of Veterans Affairs, and a variety of additional programs for veterans operated through Veterans Service Organizations at federal, state and local levels; **and**

WHEREAS, grouping justice-involved veterans into a specific court docket significantly expedites access to veteran-specific resources, including benefits and treatment, earned through military service; **and**

WHEREAS, veterans deeply value their military experience and share an inimitable bond among their peers and Veterans Treatment Courts build upon this camaraderie by allowing participants to go through the treatment court process with people who are similarly situated and have common past experiences, and pairing veterans with volunteer veteran mentors; **and**

WHEREAS, Veterans Treatment Courts have captured national attention as a critical tool for ensuring veterans in the criminal justice system do not fall through the cracks; **and**

WHEREAS, Justice for Vets: The National Clearinghouse for Veterans Treatment Courts, under the direction of the National Association of Drug Court Professionals, is ensuring that Veterans Treatment Courts receive comprehensive training and support to most effectively serve justice-involved veterans.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT:
Blue Star Mothers of America endorses the establishment of Veterans Treatment Courts as a vital court model for best serving this nation's justice-involved veterans in need of treatment and restoration.

This Nation owes a tremendous debt to those who have served in the defense of our freedoms. When veterans go astray they deserve the opportunity, not for incarceration, but for treatment and restoration in a Veterans Treatment Court.

Approved at the 69th Annual Convention of Blue Star Mothers of America, Inc, August 13th, 20011 at Washington DC

Wendy J Hoffman **Wendy Hoffman, National President**