



Center for Military Readiness   
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Promoting high standards and sound priorities for our military men and women.

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**Contact:** Elaine Donnelly, CMR President  
or Tommy Sears, CMR Executive Director

(734) 464-9430  
(202) 347-5333

## **Disregarding New Pentagon Report Tracking Soaring Sexual Assaults, DoD Plans to Extend Problems Into Combat Arms**

*The following comments may be attributed to **Elaine Donnelly**, President of the **Center for Military Readiness**. Mrs. Donnelly served as a member of the 1992 **Presidential Commission on the Assignment of Women in the Armed Forces**, which Congress established to research and make recommendations on all issues involving women in combat.*

"The recent [Report of the Defense Department Office of Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office \(SAPRO\)](#) chronicles a record of abject failure that is getting worse. Instead of pausing to seriously re-evaluate flawed policies, the **Obama Administration** is ordering the armed forces to extend escalating misconduct problems into "tip of the spear" combat arms units such as **Army** and **Marine** infantry and **Special Operations Forces**.

"Data and graphs published in both volumes of the annual SAPRO Report for 2013 reveal disastrous consequences of many years of social experiments with human sexuality in our military. For example:

- "Sexual assaults of military personnel have increased by **129%** since **2004** (from 1,275 to 2,949), and by **98%** (from 1,700 to 3,374) for all DoD reports filed. (Vol. I, Exh. 3, p. 59, and Fig. 8, p. 24)
- "The report on 2012 data also shows that **17%** of sexual assault allegations were unfounded, up from **13%** in 2009. Footnotes indicate that **331** false allegations in 2009 escalated to **444** in 2012 – a **34%** increase. (Vol. I, Exh.18, p. 80). Congressional initiatives based on the belief that accusations of sexual assault are *always* truthful could impede justice. Rights of both accusers and the accused depend on due process, not command or political interference in the military justice system.
- "Contrary to claims of 'success' following repeal of "**Don't Ask, Don't Tell**," SAPRO charts showing gender breakdowns of completed investigations indicate that **12%** of unrestricted reports and more than **13%** of restricted reports were filed by men. (Vol. I, Exh. 17, p. 81 and Exh. 27, p. 88, which includes an additional **8%** segment marked "gender data not available.")
- "In addition, [Volume II of the SAPRO Report](#), which presents "virtual" findings

extrapolated from the **Workplace and Gender Relations Survey of Active-Duty members (WGRA)**, suggest that more men are victims of abuse than women are. Of the nearly **26,000** active-duty survey respondents, **6.1%** of women and **1.2%** of men said they had experienced sexual assault in the past year. (Vol. II, Fig. 6, p. 13) In an article titled [Sexual Assaults in Military Raise Alarm in Washington](#), the *New York Times* concluded that in 2012, **12,100** of the **203,000 women** on active-duty and **13,900** of the **1.2 million men** on active-duty had experienced some form of sexual assault.

"The latest SAPRO report demolishes the credibility of women-in-combat activists who fail to recognize the irony of their own argument: ***Violence against women is OK, as long as it happens at the hands of the enemy.*** Joint Chiefs Chairman **Gen. Martin Dempsey**, for example, has suggested that forcing 'significant cadres' of women into direct ground combat units would help to reduce sexual assaults in the military.

"Gen. Dempsey's unsupported theory is a throwback to the post-[Tailhook](#) scandal arguments of then-**Rep. Patricia Schroeder**. The Colorado Democrat maintained that if female pilots entered tactical aviation, respect for women would increase and sexual assaults would decrease.

"More than twenty years later, following untold man-hours devoted to 'sensitivity training' provided by highly-paid consultants, Schroeder's theory has been completely discredited. Respect for women in the military remains justifiably high, but all types of sexual misconduct – ranging across the spectrum from sexual assaults to inappropriate romantic relationships – have steadily escalated with no end in sight.

"The best way to show true respect for women in our military is to reinforce common sense and sound policies that encourage discipline rather than indiscipline. As explained in this **CMR Policy Analysis**, Congress should exercise its constitutional authority to codify women's long-standing direct ground combat exemptions:

[What Congress Can Do: Sound Policy for Women in the Military,](#)

"SAPRO data and empirical evidence that is based on actual experience, not feminist theories, should reinforce calls for common sense and sound priorities, not more social experiments that harm both military women and men.

"There are no valid arguments for forcing (not "allowing") women to serve in Army and Marine infantry, armor, artillery, and Special Operations Forces battalions. For decades, Pentagon officials have reported that military women are promoted at rates equal to or faster than men.

"Both women and men in the military deserve updated, reality-based policies that combine recent lessons learned with classic principles that should be strengthened, not weakened. Congress must intervene before the administration's incremental plans irreversibly extend unresolved social problems into fighting battalions that are key to mission accomplishment in the **All-Volunteer Force**."

*To schedule an interview with Elaine Donnelly, call 734/464-9430, or Tommy Sears at 202/347-5333.*

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