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Dr. Jill A. Rough  
National Commission on Military, National and Public Service  
2530 Crystal Drive  
Suite 1000, Box #63  
Arlington, VA 22202

Dear Dr. Rough:

I served as a sub-committee head in the Department of the Army's ***Women in the Army Study of 1978***. It had become apparent that women would be needed to make up for a 300,000 shortfall of eligible males in the enlistment age groups.

In the four sub-committees, I was the only male officer from a combat branch – Infantry. I was a Lt. Col., a graduate of West Point, and an infantry officer who had been a company commander and battalion operations officer in 1968 within the 1<sup>st</sup> Cavalry Division, to include the Battles for Hue during Tet 68, Khe Sahn and A Shau Valley. Our battalion was 60 – 70% draftees, most of whom performed magnificently. My decorations included two Silver Stars and a Purple Heart.

The Committee Head and two of the sub-committee heads were female officers. The four sub-committee teams travelled to units around the world and surveyed personnel from all ranks. The key findings concerned women's comparative upper-body strength, and concern by men about their leadership traits with respect to leading men. We briefed the DCSPER of the Army in detail.

Although I personally felt at that time that a woman should be able to serve in any type of unit, the Committee Chief and the DCSPER concluded that the time was not right to suggest a woman be a rifleman, or a tank crewman. The draft had been stopped only 5 years earlier. Being the best writer in the group, I was tasked to draft the language for the Congressional Record, establishing women's exclusion from service in infantry, armored and direct support artillery battalions. This guideline stood for almost 40 years. Since that time women have proved themselves in many combatant situations, and it is a new day.

Having said all this, I would point out that a woman in an infantry squad or a special ops team, even though she can meet the physical requirements, will still be on tenuous ground until she proves herself in a tough situation. The last thing these direct combat units will need is a woman who does not volunteer to be there. So, should women be included in the draft?

Absolutely. Should drafted women be sent to infantry, armored, and cavalry battalions? Only if they volunteer and can meet the physical requirements.

With respect to your commission, of special interest to me is articulating the many reasons why young people should start the first year or two of their adult lives in military or service organizations. Most will gain levels of maturity, self-discipline, interpersonal skills, and physical health that are not otherwise available in today's culture. Ceasing the draft in 1973 was a mistake, born of the disastrous outcome of Vietnam, and solidified with the end of the Cold War. To the extent the national government intends to reinstate a properly managed draft in the future, we need to start selling the benefits now. These efforts need to target parents as well as their young people.

Sincerely,

 2/27/19  
Charles R. Baker

Colonel, USA (Ret)