

1 **Ensuring That Students Make An Informed Decision Regarding Military Service and ROTC**

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3 WHEREAS, as educators we commit daily to the flourishing of our students and work to ensure that
4 they reach their full potential, and

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6 WHEREAS, the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 mandates that all high schools receiving federal
7 funds must provide student contact information to military recruiters upon request, and must allow
8 recruiters to have the same access to students that colleges and employers have, and

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10 WHEREAS, the 1996 Solomon Amendment mandates that colleges will lose federal aid if they do
11 not allow access to military recruiters, and

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13 WHEREAS, more than 310,00 high school students are enrolled in Junior Reserve Office Training
14 (JROTC) and nearly 53,000 college students are enrolled in ROTC and receiving military training,
15 and

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17 WHEREAS, according to Congressional hearings, between 30 and 50 percent of graduating JROTC
18 students go on to join the military, and

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20 WHEREAS, ROTC graduates have a contractual obligation to serve in the military, and

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22 WHEREAS, at a period when public services like health care and education budgets are facing
23 serious cutbacks, the US military spends billions of dollars on marketing to children through TV
24 shows, infomercials, movies, musical videos, toys and video games, and

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26 WHEREAS, while primarily targeting students from an economically disadvantaged background,
27 military recruiters focus on the benefits and avoid mentioning the dangers of military service or
28 criticisms of U.S. militarism, and

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30 WHEREAS, ROTC instruction is written by the Pentagon and is standardized across high school
31 and college campuses, and does not address the perils of military service or alternatives to wars, and

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33 WHEREAS, the dangers of military service are well documented and include death, permanent
34 injury, exposure to environmental toxins such as Agent Orange, witnessing or participating in war
35 crimes, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, sexual harassment and assault, higher rates of suicide, and
36 other problems,¹ and

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38 WHEREAS, in the same way educators expose students to diverse perspectives on any issue, they
39 should ensure that high school and college students are able to give informed consent when making
40 decisions about military service and therefore need to be exposed to contending positions on
41 whether to join the military:

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43 **RESOLVED, that the AFT calls on school districts, colleges and universities to offer their**
44 **students diverse views about military service and ROTC, balancing arguments for military**
45 **service and ROTC training with the arguments of critics of military service, including its**
46 **health risks, and**

¹ According to a RAND study, of the nearly 2.7 million Americans who served in Afghanistan and Iraq, at least 20% of them have PTSD and/or Depression (<http://www.veteransandptsd.com/PTSD-statistics.html>); The Academy Award-nominated documentary *The Invisible War* portrays an epidemic of sexual assault and harassment of women and men in the military. (<http://invisiblewarmovie.com>)

47 **RESOLVED, that the AFT develop a curriculum guide with resources for teachers from the**
48 **perspective of those who advocate for military service and those who oppose it (such as those**
49 **provided by speakers from Veterans for Peace and counter-recruitment literature),² and**
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51 **RESOLVED, that the AFT advocate that ROTC classes offered at institutes of higher**
52 **education must be subject to the normal, faculty-governed course approval procedure like any**
53 **other course at the institution prior to being offered for academic credit at colleges and**
54 **universities.**

² Scott Harding and Seth Kershner, *Counter-Recruitment and the Campaign to Demilitarize Public Schools*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2015; Veterans for Peace website: <https://www.veteransforpeace.org>; Counter-recruitment resources from American Friends Service Committee: <https://www.afsc.org/resource/counter-recruitment>