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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: October 3, 2016

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**JOINT STATEMENT FROM FIRST LADY CHIRLANE MCCRAY AND
DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS' SERVICES COMMISSIONER LOREE SUTTON ON
TRUMP'S REMARKS REGARDING PTSD**

"Mr. Trump has again demonstrated that he is ill-prepared to address the needs of our veterans – men and women who have sacrificed everything for our freedoms and whose continued commitment to serving others underscores their extraordinary strengths, forged through struggle and adversity. The implication that individuals struggling with PTSD are somehow weak is completely unfounded. His comments come at a crucial time when our returning service members and their families are all too often hesitant to reach out for mental health services precisely because they fear being considered weak or defective. Trump's callous remarks reinforce this deadly stigma and wound the pride of all who have donned the uniform on behalf of our great nation.

One in five individuals in this country is struggling with mental health. These individuals deserve a leader who will respect their complex needs through actual strategies, informed plans and robust programs. The last thing we need is a leader like Trump, who apparently deems worthy of respect only those who meet his definition of strength, which excludes those who have been taken prisoner, those who struggle with the unseen wounds of war or any individual suffering from a mental health issue.

In New York City, we embrace our veterans and their families as our City's leading natural renewable resource. Accordingly, through [ThriveNYC](#) we will continue to integrate clinical treatment for PTSD, depression and other mental health concerns with peer support, holistic services and community engagement through theater, culture and the arts; we will continue to develop innovative approaches to end veteran homelessness; and connect veterans and their families with a burgeoning array of educational, employment and entrepreneurial opportunities. There simply is no greater privilege."

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