



1090 Vermont Avenue, NW | Suite 850
Washington, DC 20005
(202) 420-7873

August 29, 2017

Gen. James Mattis, Secretary of Defense
The Pentagon
1000 Defense Pentagon
Washington, D.C. 20301

Hon. Elaine Duke, Acting Secretary
Department of Homeland Security
245 Murray Lane, SW
Washington, D.C. 20528

Secretary Mattis and Acting Secretary Duke,

As the nation's premier organization representing LGBT conservatives and straight allies — many of whom have served honorably in the nation's military and continue to do so — Log Cabin Republicans urges you to avail yourself of the authority provided to you in the recent presidential memorandum "*Military Service by Transgender Individuals*" and respond with a recommendation allowing for continued service and accession by transgender individuals in the United States military.

Claims made in the aforementioned memorandum regarding the ability of transgender individuals to serve have been refuted in numerous studies, most notably as recently as last year's report by the Rand Corporation titled "*Assessing the Implications of Allowing Transgender Personnel to Serve Openly*".

Transgender personnel should be viewed as individuals, not monolithically as a group. Questions of military readiness can and should be considered of all potential accessions — regardless of gender identity — but disqualifying an entire cohort simply because of who they are raises serious constitutional questions and the specter of past discriminatory military policies that time has led our nation to regret.

According to Pentagon officials, in the year since open service has been allowed, an estimated 250 servicemembers have publicly come out as transgender (AP, "*Military chiefs seek delay in allowing transgender enlistment*," June 23, 2017). These patriotic Americans, guilty of no wrong, have followed protocol and played by the rules. It would be a blemish upon the military and our nation if the institution to which they dedicated themselves betrayed their allegiance.

Present and future transgender servicemembers should be viewed as patriotic Americans willing to serve and sacrifice to protect our freedom, evaluated on a case-by-case basis using the same standards applied to any other potential servicemember. It is in this spirit that Log Cabin Republicans urges you to recommend that the White House reconsider its proposed guidance and return to a policy that allows for the continuance of open service for transgender Americans.

Respectfully,

Gregory T. Angelo
President