

# Transgender Ban is “Betrayal of Loyal Patriots’ Trust”

NEW YORK, NY (July 28, 2017) – Today, Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America (IAVA), the leading Post-9/11 veterans organization, sent a letter to President Trump urging him to retract his shocking announcement reversing existing military policy and banning transgender people serving in the Armed Forces. In a letter that was circulated to all leading VSOs, IAVA is joined by the Air Force Women Officers Associated (AFWOA), the Service Women’s Action Network (SWAN) and the NYC Veterans Alliance in representing and supporting the interests of millions of America’s 21 million veterans and the military community currently serving.

The letter states:

“This change is harmful and contrary to American values. It is also detrimental to national security. Thousands of transgender troops are serving in our military right now. An unknown number are in combat zones today. This policy reversal undermines an unknown number of active duty troops, who have been told by their Commander-in-Chief that they are banned from serving—after they were encouraged to openly serve just last October. This is a betrayal of these loyal patriots’ trust. And in an era when so few people volunteer to serve, no American who is willing and able to wear the uniform should be turned away. Equality is a force-multiplier for our military.”

The letter, posted online here, comes after IAVA joined the strong, bi-partisan public and veterans community opposition to the announcement. IAVA’s forceful opposition representing the perspective of Post-9/11 veterans has already been featured in the [New York Times](#), [Good Morning America](#), [CBS Evening News](#), [The Rachel Maddow Show](#), and [The Sacramento Bee](#).

IAVA stands in support of our transgender troops and veterans—and in support of equality always. As a next-generation veteran empowerment, advocacy and support organization, IAVA is proud of its record of standing, often alone, on the right side of equality issues. We’ve fought for historic change within the Departments of Veterans Affairs (VA) and Defense (DoD). IAVA supported the June 2016 announcement by DoD to allow transgender troops to serve openly without threat of discharge, and has called for an expansion of rights and services for LGBT troops, veterans and their families. IAVA was also the only national Veteran Service Organization to support the repeal of “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” (DADT). Similarly, IAVA led the veteran community in endorsing the repeal of the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA). For our generation of veterans especially, equality is a non-partisan pillar of strong national security and true American values.

IAVA will continue fighting to ensure that our nation maintains the best and most qualified force possible and that all veterans are properly honored by our nation and served by the VA. IAVA’s platform on promoting equality for

all troops and veterans can be found on page 67 of our Policy Agenda [here](#).