

PALM CENTER

BLUEPRINTS FOR SOUND PUBLIC POLICY

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Palm Center Director Concerned by Continuation of Military's Transgender Ban

SAN FRANCISCO, CA — In response to Defense Secretary James Mattis's decision to delay implementing rules allowing transgender applicants to join the military, [Palm Center](http://www.palmcenter.org) Director Aaron Belkin released the following statement:

“Secretary Mattis's decision to prolong the enlistment ban will have the effect of requiring applicants to lie in order to join the military, as was the case under ‘don’t ask, don’t tell.’ That makes no sense because, as predicted by all of the research, transgender military service has been a success.

For the past year, transgender troops have been serving openly and have been widely praised by their Commanders, as is the case in 18 allied militaries around the world including Israel and Britain. Yet members of Congress are denigrating the value of military service by transgender troops, and Service Chiefs are pressuring Secretary Mattis to continue the transgender enlistment ban despite having no new arguments or data to back up their long-discredited assertions.

In light of the success of transgender military service, the extensive research confirming that inclusive policy promotes readiness, and the sad history of ‘don’t ask, don’t tell,’ loyally-serving transgender troops deserve to know whether Secretary Mattis stands by the claim he made at his confirmation hearing that LGBT troops can indeed serve in a ‘lethal’ military. Stonewalling on full inclusion will, just like ‘don’t ask, don’t tell,’ compromise military readiness.”

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***About The Palm Center:** The Palm Center is an independent research institute committed to sponsoring state-of-the-art scholarship to enhance the quality of public dialogue about critical and controversial issues of the day. Our research has been published in leading social scientific journals and extensively consulted by the US military. The Palm Center seeks to be a resource for scholars, policymakers, journalists, opinion leaders, students and the public at large. For more information, visit us at www.palmcenter.org.*