



July 27, 2017

Homefront Hugs USA Press Release

After nearly sixteen years of serving our troops, veterans and families without conditions, we are dismayed and shocked to read that President Trump declared transgender men and women may no longer serve in our United States military.

We cannot remain silent as our transgender men and women who volunteered to serve our country and have sacrificed equally for our country and freedoms are rejected from our armed forces. When one walks the hallowed paths of Arlington Cemetery, one is walking amongst the greatest heroes of our country from all walks of life including the graves of transgender veterans.

For the past year, under the previous administration, preparations were made to become even more cohesive and inclusive in all branches, especially for transgender troops. Our president seems to have decided to move the clock backwards and this regrettable message has been sent to our troops, veterans and military families and our citizens young and old. In just one tweet, President Trump managed to spit on the sacrifices of all our troops as they work together worldwide; willing to lay down their lives as one unit - one band of brothers and sisters.

With the current military suicide crisis, alienating and declaring transgender citizens specifically our troops, stating that they may no longer serve in our armed forces, is unconscionable. Not every service member will step forward to announce he or she is transgender now. As a result, this discriminatory policy will force secrecy to remain, and lower morale with this irresponsible tweet. Mental health issues will increase within units. Regrettably, suicides, which already are at record levels daily, will continue and increase.

Any physically and mentally fit citizen who volunteers to serve our country should be honored and welcomed without any discrimination in terms of sexual orientation, sex, religion, race, or culture. Very few heroes make the commitment to serve our country at peril, with complete reverence of our constitution and freedoms for all. Transgender citizens have been serving our country for decades and this July 2017 were supposed to celebrate full integration into our armed forces after a solid year of preparation in all five branches. We have full confidence in our brave strong warriors serving our country exemplifying zero fear or prejudice against any fellow warriors or group of fellow warriors. All simply wish to protect our freedoms and safety. That is the definition of heroism and sacrifice and why we honor and salute our troops and veteran every day without pause.

We salute all honorable troops serving who are true patriots, not fearful or hateful of fellow heroes in arms, able to work cohesively as a unit anywhere in the world against real enemies. This type of announcement by a leader of the free world and commander-in-chief can be extremely damaging to the morale and cohesion of our troops and wounded veterans healing.

At Homefront Hugs USA, we will continue to support all our troops, vets and families without conditions. We know their sacrifices are endless for our freedoms.

Finally, we commend all military leaders and veterans who have spoken up to defend every single one of their troops; who have no place or time for these divisions. Transgender citizens of this country are human beings with the right to equal treatment under our constitution. Transgender troops and

veterans are as heroic as any other service member, as well as their brave military families. We stand with our transgender warriors united and thank them and their families for their sacrifices. Freedom Endures.

Sincerely ,

Alessandra and Ed Kellermann

Alessandra and Ed Kellermann
Presidents and Founders
Homefront Hugs USA

Recipient of Points of Light Volunteerism Award
Recipient of the Four Chaplains Award