

PALM CENTER

BLUEPRINTS FOR SOUND PUBLIC POLICY

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CONTACT: Brad Luna, [LUNA+EISENLA media](#)

brad@lunaeisenlamedia.com | 202-812-8140 (mobile)

Palm Center Commends New Pentagon Policy on Transgender Service as “Historic Decision” *Belkin Calls New Policy “An Enormous Accomplishment with a Durable Impact on All Service Members”*

SAN FRANCISCO, CA – The [Palm Center](#), an independent research center publishing state-of-the-art scholarship on transgender personnel in the military, lauded Defense Secretary Ashton B. Carter’s announcement today that the Pentagon will allow transgender Americans to serve openly and honestly.

“With today’s historic decision, the US military has taken a sweeping step to advance readiness,” said Aaron Belkin, Palm Center director and a leading expert on the military service of LGBT Americans. **“In ending discrimination that had no basis in medical science or military necessity, Secretary Carter is enhancing readiness as well as core values of honesty and integrity, an enormous accomplishment with a durable impact on all service members.”**

Belkin added: **“With the repeal of ‘don’t ask, don’t tell’ and the elimination of the combat exclusion rule on women, today’s historic step to end transgender discrimination completes the Obama administration’s successful effort to strengthen our armed forces by ensuring that service is based on people’s merit and not their personal identity.”**

Belkin noted that the transgender ban, which affects an estimated 12,800 troops currently in service, **“crumbled with record speed”** in comparison to the long battles to end discrimination based on race, gender and sexual orientation.

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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 and cited by the US military and others. 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.*