

# PALM CENTER

BLUEPRINTS FOR SOUND PUBLIC POLICY

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## NEW MULTI-YEAR RESEARCH PROJECT TO ADDRESS TRANSGENDER MILITARY SERVICE

SAN FRANCISCO (July 30, 2013) - Today, the Palm Center announced a new, multi-year research initiative to study transgender service in the US military. The initiative is the largest and most comprehensive academic research project ever conducted on transgender military service, and Project Director Indra Lusero has launched the effort by commissioning 16 scholars to conduct 11 studies on whether and how the U.S. armed forces could include transgender troops without undermining readiness.

According to Lusero, "This academic research will inform an important public conversation by providing facts and evidence about transgender military service and gender expression in armed forces." She added that, "Militaries around the world are updating their policies, and we are already conducting research in Canada, Britain and Australia to learn whether their trans-inclusive regulations have impacted readiness."

Although Britain, Israel, Australia and Canada allow transgender people to serve in uniform, the U.S. military lacks a clear and coherent policy. That said, applicable regulations force most transgender troops to conceal their gender identity from commanders. Unlike the "don't ask, don't tell" law, however, regulations governing transgender service are not written in statute. As a result, the Obama administration could unilaterally modify them via executive action.

In addition to addressing transgender service in foreign militaries, new research will include analyses of transgender inclusion in police and fire departments, reviews of relevant policies that prisons and athletic organizations have adopted, assessments of whether and how military doctors could better accommodate medical needs of transgender troops and of how military policies concerning appearance, hair and dress could be amended.

The new initiative builds on the Palm Center's 14-year record of commissioning research on gays and lesbians in the military. It includes an advisory board of active duty transgender service members and veterans, three legal co-directors, a communications director, a military coordinator and a research fellow. The initiative is funded by grants from Tawani Foundation and Wells Fargo.

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The Palm Center is committed to sponsoring state-of-the-art scholarship to enhance the quality of public dialogue about critical and controversial issues of the day. For the past decade, the Palm Center's research on sexual minorities in the military has been published in leading social scientific journals. The Palm Center seeks to be a resource for university-affiliated as well as independent scholars, students, journalists, opinion leaders, and members of the public. For more information, see [www.palmcenter.org](http://www.palmcenter.org)