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**Chiefs Seek to Block Fully Fit Transgender Applicants from Serving as Army Spends $300 Million to Recruit 6,000 Soldiers**

**SAN FRANCISCO, CA** — In response to today's announcement that Service Chiefs are requesting a 6-month delay in the repeal of the Pentagon's ban on enlistment by transgender applicants seeking to join the military, [Palm Center](http://lunaeisenlamedia.pr-optout.com/Tracking.aspx?Data=HHL%3d8%2c70%3b9-%3eLCE593%3b7%40%26SDG%3c90%3a.&RE=MC&RI=4444600&Preview=False&DistributionActionID=16308&Action=Follow+Link) Director Aaron Belkin released the following statement:

**“Transgender troops have been serving openly and effectively for a year, as predicted by all of the research showing that inclusive policy for LGBT troops promotes readiness.**

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**“A s​ix-month​ delay of the last piece of inclusive policy, the repeal of the enlistment ban, will only produce redundant evidence about the contributions of transgender service members. Indeed, the Chiefs who are demanding ongoing delay are not bringing any new arguments or new data to the table, but are recycling long-discredited concerns whose only basis is emotion and politics, not data.  It is particularly remarkable, as the Army** [**spends**](https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/politics/2017/02/12/army-spend-300-million-bonuses-and-ads-get-6000-more-recruits/97757094/) **an additional $300 million to recruit 6,000 Soldiers this year, that it would seek to turn away Americans who are fit and eager to serve.**

**“Eighteen foreign militaries including Israel, Britain, Australia and Canada allow transgender personnel to serve, and none have reported any detriment to readiness. Forcing transgender applicants to lie to get into the military is ‘don't ask, don't tell’ all over again. General Neller, General Milley and the Pentagon's civilian leadership have a responsibility to their troops not to lead us back to that sad era.”**

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