

Statement by The Bar Association of San Francisco condemning President Trump's announcement to bar transgender individuals from military service

July 27, 2017 – San Francisco, California – Almost seven years ago, the LGBT community and our nation celebrated the repeal of Don't Ask Don't Tell, a discriminatory law that forced members of the military to lie about their identity in order to serve our country. The repeal of Don't Ask Don't Tell paved the way for further advancements of equality in our armed services, including in 2016 an end to the military's ban on service by transgender individuals, allowing those service members to no longer serve in silence and opening up new possibilities to serve for transgender people.

The history of advancement and inclusion in our military, including open service by members of the LGBT community, has served as a mirror of our progress as a nation, and helped further acceptance and inclusion of all communities in our society. With this in mind, The Bar Association of San Francisco announces profound disappointment in the pending policy reversal announcement by President Trump this week barring transgender individuals from serving in the United States military in any capacity. A policy that selects members of our military on any grounds other than military qualification is driven only by unacceptable and discriminatory social objectives, aimed at marginalizing members of our society, and reverses progress. The President's reference to transgender military service as a "disruption" is unacceptable and demeaning of the patriotic and selfless service of the transgender members of our armed forces.

The Bar Association of San Francisco stands with the transgender community and the LGBT community as a whole in condemning the recent policy announcement. We will continue our steadfast efforts to promote acceptance and equality. Our mission to pioneer constructive change in society remains as important as ever.

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The Bar Association of San Francisco (BASF) is a nonprofit voluntary membership organization of attorneys, law students, and legal professionals in the San Francisco Bay Area. Founded in 1872, BASF enjoys the support of more than 7,300 individuals, law firms, corporate legal departments, and law schools. Through its board of directors, its committees, and its volunteer legal services programs and other community efforts, BASF has worked actively to promote and achieve equal justice for all and oppose discrimination in all its forms, including, but not limited to, discrimination based on race, sex, disability, and sexual orientation. BASF provides a collective voice for public advocacy, advances professional growth and education, and attempts to elevate the standards of integrity, honor, and respect in the practice of law.