

March 27, 2019

Dear Representative:

ACLU Urges YES Vote on H. Res. 124 – Stand with Transgender Servicemembers

The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) strongly urges you to vote YES on H. Res. 124, a resolution sponsored by Representative Kennedy expressing opposition to the Trump administration's discriminatory and unconstitutional efforts to ban transgender people from serving in the Armed Forces. The ACLU will score this vote.

The resolution would put the House of Representatives on record:

- strongly opposing President Trump's discriminatory ban on transgender members of the Armed Forces;
- rejecting the flawed scientific and medical claims upon which it is based; and
- strongly urging the Department of Defense not to reinstate the ban and to maintain an inclusive policy allowing qualified transgender Americans to enlist and serve in the Armed Forces.

In August 2017, just weeks after President Trump announced in a series of morning tweets that he was going to ban transgender people from serving in the Armed Forces, the ACLU brought a legal challenge to the ban. The lawsuit argues that the ban violates the constitutional guarantees of equal protection and substantive due process by singling out transgender individuals for unequal and discriminatory treatment. It was brought on behalf of current members of the Armed Forces who are transgender. They include:

- **Petty Officer First Class Brock Stone**, who has served in the U.S. Navy for 11 years, including a nine-month deployment to Afghanistan.
- **Staff Sergeant Kate Cole**, who has served in the U.S. Army for almost 10 years, including a one-year deployment to Afghanistan where she served as a team leader and designated marksman.



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- **Petty Officer First Class Teagan Gilbert**, who has served in the U.S. Navy for 13 years, including a one-year deployment to Afghanistan, and currently serves as an Information Technology specialist.

Military, medical and legal experts have repeatedly concluded that allowing open service by transgender individuals does not disrupt military readiness or unit cohesion and imposes negligible costs. By contrast, barring transgender individuals from joining the military and discharging those who are already serving is exceedingly costly and undermines national security and military readiness.

The ACLU will continue to fight this discriminatory and unconstitutional effort to ban transgender people from the Armed Forces. Our clients – and other transgender servicemembers just like them – are brave men and women who should be able to continue serving their country ably and honorably without being discriminated against by their own commander in chief.

The ACLU urges you to stand with transgender servicemembers by voting YES on H. Res. 124. Please reach out to Ian Thompson, ACLU senior legislative representative, with any questions at (202) 715-0837 or ithompson@aclu.org.

Sincerely,



Ronald Newman
National Political Director



Ian S. Thompson
Senior Legislative Representative