

December 5, 2016

President Barack Obama  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue  
Washington, DC 20500

**Re: Support for Clemency Application for Ms. Chelsea Manning**

Dear Mr. President:

As organizations dedicated to working for the full equality of LGBTQ people, we write in support of the clemency petition of Ms. Chelsea Manning. We support commuting her court-martial sentence to time served. Ms. Manning is currently in the seventh year of a thirty-five year sentence for disclosing classified information to the media with the intention of raising public awareness about issues she found concerning, including the impact of war on innocent civilians. Our organizations may be of differing opinions concerning Ms. Manning's actions; however, we stand united in our support for her clemency petition. If approved, Ms. Manning will have a first chance to live a real, meaningful life as the person she was born to be.

Since she was first taken into custody in 2010, Ms. Manning, a transgender woman who is being forced to serve out her sentence in an all-male prison, has been subjected to long stretches of solitary confinement – including for attempting suicide – and denied necessary medical treatment related to her gender dysphoria. The Army even opposed her request to use her legal name and to be referred to by female pronouns. While the armed forces have finally opened the door to transgender men and women who wish to serve, the government has continually fought Ms. Manning's efforts to be treated with basic dignity.

As Ms. Manning wrote to you:

The bottom-line is this: I need help and I am still not getting it. I am living through a cycle of anxiety, anger, hopelessness, loss, and depression. I cannot focus. I cannot sleep. I attempted to take my own life. When the USDB [United States Disciplinary Barracks] placed me in solitary confinement as punishment for the attempted suicide, I tried it again because the feeling of hopelessness was so immense. This has served as a reminder to me that any lack of treatment can kill me, so I must keep fighting a battle that I wish every day would just end.

The sole relief that Ms. Manning is seeking is to be released from military prison after serving over six years of confinement – longer than any whistleblower in the history of our country. The consequences of her conviction would remain with her, including a punitive discharge, a reduction in rank, and the loss of veteran's benefits.

We urge you to consider Ms. Manning's plea and grant her clemency petition.

Sincerely,

American Civil Liberties Union  
BiNet USA  
COLAGE  
Family Equality Council  
FORGE, Inc.  
GLBTQ Legal Advocates & Defenders  
Immigration Equality  
KhushDC  
Lambda Legal  
League of United Latin American Citizens  
Los Angeles LGBT Center  
National Black Justice Coalition  
National Center for Lesbian Rights  
National LGBTQ Task Force  
National Organization for Women  
Pride at Work  
Transgender Law Center