



**Modern Military
Association
of America**

Learn How to Talk to Your Elected Officials - Including Email, Phone, and In-Person Meeting Scripts and Advice!

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[t] 202.328.3244 • [e] info@modernmilitary.org
1725 I (Eye) Street NW, Ste. 300 • Washington, DC 20036
www.ModernMilitary.org

The Voice of the LGBTQ Military and Veteran Community

The approved FY25 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) includes a provision that prevents access to the full continuum of medically necessary healthcare for transgender youth of active-duty service members and retirees.

Once implemented, thousands of young people with military parents will lose access to effective, medically necessary healthcare, forcing military families to pay out-of-pocket. The DoD has not yet instituted a policy addressing these changes to coverage, and we do not currently have a timeline on when this ban will take effect.

Transgender Military Service Ban

There is a strong likelihood of a ban on service for active-duty transgender personnel and/or a ban on medically necessary healthcare by this presidential administration. These potential bans would immediately threaten the readiness and mission capabilities of the United States Armed Forces.

There are thousands of known transgender service members who serve openly and honorably across all services within the Department of Defense (DoD). Thousands more have transgender dependents. The vast majority of these members are career military and the DoD invests 6,400 times more in the career development of transgender service members than on gender-affirming care.



Access to Medically Necessary Healthcare for Youth and Adults

Anti-LGBTQ+ legislation is a national security issue. Healthcare bans force military families to seek compassionate reassignment, early retirement, or force military families to be separated, therefore decreasing the size and readiness of the force.

More than 1.76 million children have at least one parent in active-duty service. Given that 7% to 9% of youth identify as LGBTQ+, we estimate there are at least 50,000 LGBTQ+ military-affiliated youth and approximately 10,000 transgender or gender-diverse military young people.

Military families move every two to three years, on average, which is three times more often than their civilian peers. This level of ongoing change is especially difficult for young people, which can lead to tensions at home, a struggle adapting to new schools, difficulty making new friends, and stress or anxiety if a parent is deployed. These stressors lead to higher odds that military-affiliated youth will report depressive symptoms and suicidal ideation than their civilian peers.

These struggles are even more significant for LGBTQ+ identifying military youth who also face ongoing challenges of: finding LGBTQ+ affirming communities, sharing their identity with each frequent move, dealing with anti-LGBTQ+ legislation that may not allow them to use the bathroom associated with their gender, participating in team sports, or accessing medically necessary healthcare.



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More than half (53%) of all active duty service members stationed in the United States live in states with anti-LGBTQ+ laws or policies, including healthcare, facility, and sport bans. In 2024 alone, there were **559 anti-LGBTQ+ bills** introduced in states across the country, many that specifically target transgender youth.

What These Policies Mean for Readiness, Retention, and Recruitment

The passage of the NDAA and the possibility of another trans service ban would mean the removal of thousands of highly trained and qualified transgender personnel. This loss would pose an immediate threat to military readiness as replacing these service members would take 20 years and cost approximately \$3.24 billion.

Generation Z has the highest rate (28%) of individuals who identify as LGBTQ+ , and 65% of Gen Z support LGBTQ+ equality. Enacting these harmful policies would continue to damage the DoD's reputation among prospective military-age recruits for a generation or more.

All service branches are experiencing significant recruiting shortfalls. **Targeting LGBTQ+ service members will negatively impact military recruitment and threaten the DoD's goal to be prepared for large-scale conflict in the Indo-Pacific region by 2027.**

LGBTQ+ Representation in the Military

The talking points and statistics below can help you clearly communicate to your legislators why they should care about issues impacting the LGBTQ+ military community.

Readiness

Thousands: Number of transgender service members currently serving openly and honorably.

73% of known transgender service members are Senior Enlisted personnel.

12-21 years: Typical experience of Senior Enlisted personnel, which includes multiple deployments.

2027: Military's target year to be prepared for large-scale conflict in the Indo-Pacific region.

Retention

9,000: Number of trans service members and sponsors expected to separate from service as a result of passage of the anti-LGBTQ+ DoD policies or bans.

\$3.24 Billion: Cost to replace the loss of these fully-trained and qualified personnel.

20 years: Time needed to replace the loss of these fully trained and qualified personnel.

Recruitment

28% of Generation Z identify as LGBTQ+.

65% of Gen Z support LGBTQ+ equality.

67% of Americans support trans-inclusive military policy.

27,855: Military-wide recruiting shortfall each year since 2022.



The DoD's poor reputation among Generation Z is cited as a major cause of the recruitment crisis.



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Contact Your Legislators

Remember: Your elected officials work for you. It is your right to contact them by phone, email, or in person and let them know how anti-LGBTQ+ policies and legislation impact your life.

Why Your Voice Matters

When you take the time to tell your legislators how anti-LGBTQ+ policies and laws impact YOU and YOUR family, it tells them what you, their individual constituent, is experiencing and also represents the voices of many others who aren't able to share their story.

As an LGBTQ+ service member or a family member with an LGBTQ+ young person, you have a unique perspective on how these harmful policies affect the military community.



Find Your Representatives

Start by identifying your representatives in the House and the Senate via zip code:

<https://www.congress.gov/members/find-your-member>.

You can call, email, or visit the representatives in Congress both where you are a resident and where you are currently stationed. There are templates below for both situations.

Guidelines to Contact Your Representatives

- When you call, an aide will answer the phone. Speak calmly and clearly.
- Before you call, write a script or jot down your main talking points.
- Be respectful. The staffers who answer the phone are not looking to challenge your opinion. Treat them with the same respect you expect from them, regardless of whether you agree with their political viewpoints. Thank them for their time. They are civil servants and a thank you can go a long way.
- Add your own words. Edit the script below to make it as generic (I am a military spouse who supports transgender service members) or as personal (I am an Army wife with a transgender child, and I support transgender service members) as you like.
- Let them know that you are a constituent; tell them which city, county, and/or state you are from.
- If you are calling a representative for a district where you are stationed but are not a resident, let them know that you are a military family living in their district.
- If you choose to contact each member of the [Senate Armed Services Committee](#) and/or the [House Armed Services Committee](#), let them know you are a member of a military family and you are calling because of the Senator's/Congressperson's role on SASC/HASC.
- Be brief. Aides receive a high volume of phone calls daily, so keep your call short and to the point.
- Remember: you are the expert! Your legislator's job is to represent you. You should be courteous and to the point, but don't be afraid to take a firm position.



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Phone Script

Parts of the Call	Example
Your name and state	<p>Hello, my name is [insert your name]. I'm a constituent from [insert your state], zip code [insert your zip code].</p> <p>OR</p> <p>I'm a military spouse / service member / veteran living in / stationed in your district.</p>
State the issue	<p>I am calling to ask [insert your representative's name]</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) To not oppose bans on medically necessary healthcare for military service members and families. 2) To thoroughly vet all cabinet nominations and reject any nominee who prioritizes extremism over safety / prioritizes politics over people. Stopping unqualified nominees is the first step toward a government we can trust. 3) To not support another ban on transgender service members: Over the past 9 years, transgender people have proven their ability to serve alongside all other members of our military, and we are a stronger, more capable force with everyone included. <p>Use the statistics included in this packet to make your point. Share your personal experience if you are comfortable and feel safe doing so. Explain your expertise and how these policies/appointments would impact you and your family.</p>
Explain what you would like the representative to do	<p>Please don't vote for bills that would limit funding for medically necessary healthcare / please properly vet incoming appointees / please show your support with your vote for transgender service members.</p>



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Email Templates

Opposing Anti-LGBTQ+ Legislation Targeting Trans Youth

For families who are not out

Dear Representative [blank], Dear Senator [blank],

Supporting our military means supporting the entire military. [Bill number] threatens the health, safety, and security of thousands of military families. It prohibits the Department of Defense (DoD) from providing medically necessary healthcare to transgender youth of active-duty service members and veterans.

Thousands of military families have gender-diverse dependents. Removing life-saving healthcare would personally and financially devastate service members and their families, ultimately leading many of them to seek early retirement and leave the military altogether.

Every major medical association agrees that transgender patients who receive age-appropriate medically necessary care have drastically lower rates of depression, anxiety, and suicidality. A family's healthcare decisions should not be dictated by lawmakers, but left to parents and healthcare providers.

The military is already in a recruiting and retention crisis; forcing tens of thousands of military families to re-evaluate their careers puts our nation's security at risk.

Military families serve our nation proudly. Please continue to serve them by voting NO any legislation that would eliminate medically necessary healthcare.

Thank you,
[insert name]



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For families who are out

Dear Representative [blank], Dear Senator [blank],

I am a military [family member/spouse] [living in your district/who is a constituent from city/state/zip code], and I am the parent of an [LGBTQ+] young person.

[The bill targeting trans youth] threatens the health and safety of thousands of military families. It prohibits the Department of Defense (DoD) from providing comprehensive healthcare to transgender military youth.

[Share details about how this would impact your family, the financial and emotional hardships your family might face, how you or your spouse/child is feeling, why healthcare is important for yourself or your child/spouse – anything you feel comfortable sharing.]

There are tens of thousands of LGBTQ+ young people of active-duty military members living all around the world. Removing life-saving healthcare would personally and financially devastate service members and their families, ultimately leading many of them to seek early retirement and leave the military altogether.

For my family, eliminating life-saving healthcare would force us to re-evaluate our military service. *[Share details about the emotional and financial impact of the ban and what leaving the military would do to career prospects, future earnings, upward mobility, ability to support your family, etc.]*

Our military faces a recruiting and retention crisis. Forcing tens of thousands of military families, like mine, to re-evaluate their careers puts our nation's security at risk. We serve our nation proudly. Please honor our commitment to this country by voting NO on any legislation that eliminates medically necessary healthcare.

You trust us to defend the nation. Please trust us to make healthcare decisions that are best for our family.

Thank you,
[insert name]



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Opposing a Potential Trans Service Ban

Dear Representative [blank], Dear Senator [blank],

Supporting our military means supporting the entire military. I am concerned about the devastating impact the reinstatement of a ban on transgender service members would have on tens of thousands of military families. Ultimately, any ban on transgender service poses a national security risk to the United States.

Thousands of transgender service members serve openly and honorably across all services within the Department of Defense (DoD). Thousands more have transgender dependents. Should there be a blanket ban on transgender service for current service members, it would take 20 years and cost an estimated \$3.24 billion to replace their knowledge, skills, and leadership. Transgender people have proven their ability to serve honorably and we are a stronger, more capable force with everyone included.

The removal of dedicated service members - either through the institution of a service ban or eliminating access to necessary healthcare services - would result in an immediate threat to military readiness. Furthermore, the damage to DoD's reputation among prospective military-age recruits would continue to threaten recruiting efforts to support our nation's all-volunteer force for a generation or more.

Ultimately, discriminatory policies against transgender service members impact readiness, retention, and recruitment, weakening our armed forces. Transgender service members and their families serve our nation proudly. Please continue to serve them by opposing any policy or legislation that bans the transgender community from military service.

Thank you,
[insert name]

Encouraging Senators to Properly Vet Appointees



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Dear Senator [Name],

I am writing as a concerned resident of [State] to urge you to reject the nomination of [Nominee X] for [specific position]. This nominee's troubling record of [specific harm, e.g., undermining public safety, implementing discriminatory policies, or prioritizing political loyalty over accountability] poses a direct threat to the well-being and values of our state and nation.

Here in [State], we understand the importance of leaders who prioritize people over politics. [Provide specific example related to the state, e.g., "Our state has a proud tradition of protecting [key value, such as public safety, equal opportunity, or fairness in governance], and we depend on federal leaders to uphold those principles."] [Nominee X]'s confirmation would undermine these efforts, putting [specific state issue or group, e.g., "the safety of our families," "access to justice for marginalized communities," or "our shared economic security"] at risk.

[Nominee X]'s history of [specific harm, e.g., supporting discriminatory policies, weakening public safety, or favoring corporate interests over communities] would exacerbate challenges we already face in [State]. For instance, [provide a localized example, e.g., "policies like these could worsen [specific state issue, such as housing inequality, environmental risks, or healthcare disparities] that directly impact people across our state."]

Our democracy works best when leaders are held accountable to the people they serve. By opposing [Nominee X], you have the chance to protect the values of safety, freedom, and trust that are fundamental to the residents of [State]. Rubber-stamping extremist nominees weakens public faith in government and signals that political loyalty outweighs the needs of everyday people.

I urge you to stand with the people of [State] and vote against this nomination. Your leadership is critical to ensuring that our state and nation have leaders who reflect our values and protect our future.

Thank you for your time and dedication to representing [State]. I look forward to seeing you uphold your commitment to [State] to safeguard our communities and democracy by opposing [Nominee X].

Sincerely,

[Your Name]

[Your Address]

[Your Contact Information]



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In-Person Meetings

A face-to-face meeting with your legislator can be an impactful and effective way to share your message. It's much more difficult for your elected officials to ignore your concerns when you are standing in front of them.

Where to meet

Any constituent can meet with their elected officials on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C. If you don't live near Washington, D.C., you can visit your representative at their local office(s) in your district or state. Check your representative's website for district or state office locations.

Legislators usually visit their local offices during Congressional recesses. But you don't need to wait for a recess to set up a meeting; their staff members are there to listen to constituents' concerns.

Schedule a Visit

You will need an appointment to meet with your legislator or legislative staff member. Check your legislator's website for details about how to request an appointment. Typically, you must request the meeting via email and should include:

- Your contact information and whether you are a constituent or stationed in their district
- Purpose of your meeting
- Desired dates and times
- Desired location (if not in D.C.)

You will receive a message back from the legislator's scheduler with a confirmation.

Prepare for the Meeting

Most legislative meetings are 15-20 minutes long whether it's with your legislator or a staffer, so preparation is key.

Start by gathering data, statistics, resources, and anything else to support your position. These materials can help you construct your talking points. You might also consider bringing written materials - no longer than 1-2 pages - to leave with your elected official.

Next, decide who will participate in the meeting. Keep it small - no more than five people. Consider including subject matter experts, state/national advocates, or individuals who are willing to share personal stories. Work together to create talking points and practice presenting together before the meeting to ensure you don't exceed your allotted meeting time.

Finally, determine your ask. Do you want your representative to oppose or support a specific bill? Introduce legislation? Make sure your purpose is clear to everyone attending the meeting.

During the Meeting

- **Be on time.** Show up early, but be prepared to wait. Legislators have very tight schedules, and it's not uncommon for them to have unexpected delays. Be patient.
- **Make sure at least one member of your group has a business card** to share with the staff member greeting you.
- **Use the representative's proper title during introductions:** "Senator [Last Name] or Representative [Last Name], thank you for meeting with us."
- **Thank them for meeting with you.**



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- **Speak slowly and clearly.**
- **Be respectful.** Do not use confrontational language. If your representative has voted against LGBTQ+ equality in the past, share how that has negatively impacted your life.
- **Get to the point.** You don't have much time, so stick to your talking points. Start by sharing your objective ("I'm here today to ask you to oppose any legislation that would ban transgender service members from serving.")
- **Tell your story.** This is the most important part of the meeting: let them know how potential legislation would impact or current legislation has impacted you and your family. Practice in advance to avoid sounding scripted; speak honestly and openly.
- **Give the legislator a chance to ask questions or seek clarification.** Answer what you can, but if you don't know the answer, it's okay to say, "I will follow up with you with that information" and request the contact information for a staffer to follow up with.
- **Have an ask.** Before your time is up, make sure you come back to your purpose: what is it you are asking your elected official to do? You can also gently push the legislator for an answer or request to have an answer by a set deadline.
- **Thank them again** at the end of the meeting for meeting with you.



After the Meeting

- Send a personalized letter or email thanking your legislator for meeting with you.
- Reiterate your main points and what action you want the legislator to take.
- Ask them for their thoughts on your meeting and whether they will take your requested action.
- If they had questions you couldn't answer during the meeting, answer them in your letter. Leave your contact information.

Join a Lobby Day

Another way to get face time with your legislators is to attend a Lobby Day with organizations dedicated to LGBTQ+ equality. These events are pre-planned by an advocacy group or nonprofit, so you don't have to schedule your own appointments (but you will need to register with the hosting organization and follow their advocacy directives).

During a Lobby Day visit, you will go to the Capitol or your local office with others who are advocating for LGBTQ+ equality or advocating against legislation that would harm the LGBTQ+ community.

You will only have 2-3 minutes to share your story and present your request to your legislator during a lobbying event, so have your main talking points ready and practice being brief and concise.