

Family Research Council Hails Pentagon Decision to Delay Transgender Enlistments and Commissions

Friday, just hours before the U.S. military was supposed to begin accepting enlistments and applications for commissions from transgendered Americans, Secretary of Defense ordered a six-month delay in the Obama-era requirement to further assess its potential impact on the Department of Defense's war-fighting capabilities.

Department spokeswoman Dana White issued this short statement announcing the decision:

Secretary Mattis today approved a recommendation by the services to defer accessing transgender applicants into the military until Jan. 1, 2018.

"The services will review their accession plans and provide input on the impact to the readiness and lethality of our forces.

The Associated Press later reported it received a copy of a memo from Mattis to the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the branch secretaries that shed further light on his decision. In it, he said he believes the department must measure "each policy decision against one standard," which is how it will impact the military's ability to defend the U.S.

"After consulting with the service chiefs and secretaries, I have determined that it is necessary to defer the start of accessions for six months," the memo stated. "We will use this additional time to evaluate more carefully the impact of such accessions on readiness and lethality."

“Accession” is the official military term for new enlistments and commissions.

It was reported earlier in the week that the Army and Air Force had been seeking a two-year hold on the new requirement. Mattis said in the memo that his decision to adopt a six-month hold was only meant to allow him to have a chance to assess the impacts with incoming Trump administration officials as opposed to leadership installed by President Barack Obama.

The Family Research Council hailed the decision regardless. In a statement following White’s announcement, the Christian pro-family group said it took the news as an encouraging first step in the right direction. FRC vice president Jerry Boykin, a retired Army lieutenant general and founding member of Delta Force, stated:

The Pentagon is right to hit the brakes on a policy that will fail to make our military more capable in performing its mission to fight and win wars. It’s good that the nation’s military leadership realizes what the American people realize, this policy makes no sense.

The military has been reduced to stripping parts from museums, which is why it makes no sense to spend more than a billion taxpayer dollars on new body parts for anyone who joins the military and identifies as transgender. After lost deployment and other costs are factored in, taxpayers could be on the hook for as much as \$3.7 billion over the next 10 years. Spending billions of dollars on transgender surgeries and treatment plans, when the military has other priorities that would actually ensure its effectiveness in war, is irresponsible.

However, the cost to readiness, recruitment, retention, morale and cohesion will be even greater. Personnel who identify as transgender are expected to receive exceptions to policies and medical requirements that their peers will

still be required to meet. These exceptions may be applied to policies about everything from physical and mental fitness standards to dress and presentation standards, and they create an unfairness that will undermine unit cohesion and morale.

These serious concerns no doubt motivated the military service chiefs to request a delay.

Now, Secretary Mattis and Congress need to ensure the priorities of the U.S. armed forces remain those that the secretary has outlined: mission readiness, command proficiency and combat effectiveness. These should be the new priorities, not the last administration's social engineering projects that ignore military readiness."

Click [here](#) to read the FRC report on the financial impact of the transgender policy that Boykin noted in his statement.
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