

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE DISTRICT OF MARYLAND**

BROCK STONE, *et al.*,

Plaintiffs,

v.

DONALD J. TRUMP, *et al.*,

Defendants.

**Civil Action No. 17-cv-2459
(MJG)**

DECLARATION OF LERNES J. HEBERT

I, Lernes J. Hebert, do hereby declare as follows:

1. I am currently the Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense, Military Personnel Policy, in the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness. In that capacity, I am responsible for overseeing the human resource policies impacting the sustainment of the all-volunteer-force for the Department of Defense (“DoD” or “the Department”), which consists of 1.4 million active duty military personnel and 1.1 million Guard and Reserve personnel. I have served in Military Personnel Policy since August 2003 and have led the Department through a number of major personnel initiatives and policy changes. Prior to my retirement from the United States Air Force in the rank of Colonel after 24 years of active service, I served at every level of the field of personnel management to include key assignments in the Office of the Secretary of Defense, the Air Staff, at the Air Force Personnel Center, and with Air Combat Command. I hold a Master of Science Degree in

National Security Strategy from the National War College and a Master of Arts degree in Management and Computer Resource Management from Webster University.

2. In the exercise of my official duties, I have been made aware of the above-referenced litigation pending in the U.S. District Court for the District of Maryland, as well as three additional suits by transgender individuals pending in other jurisdictions, including *Jane Doe I v. Trump*, pending in the District of Columbia, in which I have submitted a declaration similar to the one here. Specifically, I am aware of the preliminary injunction entered by the Court in this action on November 21, 2017, with respect to three aspects of the Presidential Memorandum of August 25, 2017, including the provision directing DoD to maintain the Department's longstanding policy which generally prohibits accession of transgender individuals into military service. My understanding is that the Court's injunction resets an effective date of January 1, 2018, for the accessions provisions of Defense Department Directive-Type Memorandum ("DTM") 16-005, issued on June 30, 2016, which allows for the accession of transgender individuals into the military.

3. I submit this declaration in support of Defendants' Motion for a Partial Stay of the Court's Preliminary Injunction Orders Pending Appeal. The purpose of this declaration is to provide the Court with my assessment, based on my experience and professional judgment, regarding the feasibility of implementing the court's orders by January 1, 2018, and the harmful impact to the military, its missions, and readiness if it is required to comply with the Court's orders that mandate the January 1, 2018 effective date for the accessions policy in DTM 16-005. The statements made herein are based on my personal knowledge and information available to me in the course of my official duties.

4. Secretary of Defense Mattis exercised his authority on June 30, 2017, to defer the effective date for the accessions provisions of DTM 16-005 from July 1, 2017, to January 1, 2018. *See* Department of Defense, Release No. NR-250-17 (June 30, 2017). Subsequently, the Presidential Memorandum of August 25, 2017, directed the Secretary of Defense (and the Secretary of Homeland Security with respect to the U.S. Coast Guard) to maintain the then-currently effective policy restricting accession by transgender individuals into military service beyond January 1, 2018, until such time as the Secretary of Defense, after consulting with the Secretary of Homeland Security, provides a recommendation to the President. The Presidential Memorandum also directed the Secretary of Defense to submit an implementation plan to the President by February 21, 2018, with respect to the policy set forth in the memorandum concerning accession and service by transgender individuals in the military. The Presidential Memorandum further directed that the implementation plan shall adhere to the determinations made by the Secretary as to what steps are appropriate and consistent with military effectiveness, lethality, budgetary constraints, and existing law. The review being undertaken by the Panel of Experts appointed by the Secretary on September 14, 2017, to carry out the study directed by the President remains ongoing. The Panel's work is expected to result in recommendations to the Secretary of Defense early next year. The Department would also establish the policy, standards, and procedures to support those Panel recommendations adopted by the Secretary. Thus, at present, the Department is studying revisions to policy concerning military service by transgender individuals, to be completed in early 2018, while at the same time preparing to operate under a judicial order to implement DTM 16-005 by January 1, 2018.

5. Implementing the Court's orders with respect to the accessions policy in DTM 16-005 by January 1, 2018, will impose extraordinary burdens on the Department and the

military services. For organizations as large and as complex as DoD and the military services, the study, development, and implementation of significant personnel policies is necessarily a substantial undertaking. As set forth below, there are considerable requirements associated with implementing this significant and complex policy change across the Department, considering that those personnel directly responsible for execution number in the tens of thousands and are geographically dispersed across the United States. Specifically, implementation of a new accession policy necessitates preparation, training, and communication to ensure those responsible for application of the accession standards are thoroughly versed in the policy and its implementation procedures. This requires that the following personnel have a working knowledge or in-depth medical understanding of the standards and identity validation requirements associated with processing an applicant under new requirements:

- 20,367 recruiters (responsible for resolving any gender identity conflict between an applicant's government identification documents and the gender in which they present themselves and assisting the applicant in completing the Accession Medical Prescreen Report (DD Form 2807-2), including by providing substantiating and supporting medical documents);
- 2,785 employees across 65 geographically dispersed Military Entrance Processing Stations (MEPS), including 568 medical division personnel, 102 Chief and Assistant Chief Medical Officers, and approximately 375 fee-based medical providers, all necessitating in-depth knowledge of the standards;
- 32 Service Medical Waiver Authorities authorized to grant medical waiver requests following a thorough evaluation of the applicant's medical history and recommendation from the MEPS Chief Medical Officer; and

- Personnel at the nine initial military entrance training locations (“boot camps”) and the associated military hospitals that support them.

6. Beyond the sheer number of components and personnel involved, the implementation of accessions criteria is itself a complex undertaking. Accession criteria are based on service needs and are designed to ensure that those individuals accepted are “qualified, effective, and able-bodied persons” (10 U.S.C. § 505) who are capable of successfully performing military duties. Such duties involve a wide range of demands including exposure to danger, emotional stress, harsh environments, and the operation of dangerous, sensitive or classified equipment. Such demands are not normally found in civilian occupations. Further, all military members must be available for worldwide duty 24 hours a day without restriction or delay. This duty may be in remote areas lacking immediate and comprehensive medical support. An important objective of this thorough applicant screening is to ensure that persons accepted for the military are physically and psychologically qualified to withstand such isolation and rigors. These policies exist to protect both the individuals concerned, as well as members of their units and the overall readiness of the force. The accession screening process requires military and medical professionals well versed in the standards, and their applicability to military readiness, to ensure both the individual and the Department’s best interests are served. In the case of the transgender accession standards, the standards themselves are complex, interdisciplinary standards necessitating evaluation across several systems of the body, to include behavioral and mental health (e.g. diagnosis of gender dysphoria or related comorbidities), surgical procedures (particularly thoracic and genital), and endocrinology (for the purposes of cross-sex hormone therapy). No other accession standard has been implemented that presents such a multifaceted review of an applicant’s medical history.

7. It is also important to remember that this court-mandated policy change comes at a time when the military's operational tempo remains high and DoD's primary focus is on ongoing combat and contingency operations overseas.

8. Accordingly, if the Department is compelled to execute transgender accessions by January 1 absent sufficient guidance, resources, and training, the possibility exists that transgender applicants may not receive the appropriate medical and administrative accession screening necessary for someone with a complex medical condition. As a result, an applicant may be accessed for military service who is not physically or psychologically equipped to engage in combat/operational service.

9. Although the Department was in the process of implementing DTM 16-005 after its issuance in June 2016, that process was first extended by the Secretary in June 2017, and then deferred further pending completion of the study directed by the President on August 25, 2017. In addition, key personnel involved in that accession enterprise have rotated in the past several months, necessitating additional preparation, training, and communication to ensure those responsible for application of the accession standards are thoroughly prepared. Thus, notwithstanding the implementation efforts made to date, the Department still would not be adequately and properly prepared to begin processing transgender applicants for military service by January 1, 2018.

10. Finally, especially given that this extensive and elaborate process for implementing the DTM 16-005 accessions policy is time-consuming and costly, the Department will be twice burdened if it is required to implement DTM 16-005 by January 1, and then potentially a different policy after the Department concludes its study and finalizes a policy. It is possible that the accession standards and the implementing procedures that result from that

ongoing policy review could be different from those that the Court has directed DoD to implement on January 1, 2018. Carrying out the implementation enterprise again, after the ongoing policy review is completed, would not only present the prospect of significant duplicative costs and administrative burdens, but the high potential for sowing confusion in the ranks as to the applicable policy.

Pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1746(2), I declare under the penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct.

Executed on 12/06/17



Lernes J. Hebert