

California National Guard to defy Trump administration's military transgender ban

by Daniel Jativa

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The California National Guard says that it will not implement the mandate by the Trump administration rolled out Friday by the Pentagon banning transgender individuals from serving.

Maj. Gen. Matthew Beevers, one of the highest-ranking officers of the California National Guard, told [The Hill](#) on Friday that whether an individual serving under him is transgender does not dictate their capability of performing their duty. He says that an individual's gender identity "is the least of our concerns."

"Every transgendered soldier or airmen currently serving in the California National Guard will remain in our ranks," said Beevers. "Further, we will not treat any soldier or airmen any differently today, than we did yesterday."

Beevers said that service members need to be judged based on their merit, accomplishments, and abilities, rather than their gender identity, echoing statements he made to a state legislative committee [earlier this year](#). He highlighted the exceptions and waivers stipulated in the new policies rolled out by military officials, saying that there is still "the opportunity to continue to bring transgender service members in as long as they meet the requirements for service."

"Anybody who is willing and able to serve state [and] nation should have the opportunity to serve. It's unconscionable in my mind that we would fundamentally discriminate against a certain class of people based on their gender identity," said Beevers. "That should be the absolute least of our worries."

More than 14,000 transgender service members will be allowed to continue serving in the armed forces as long as they received a diagnosis of gender dysphoria, [according to NPR](#).

Beevers said that the California National Guard will work with military officials to "bring transgender individuals in under the current policy." He also said that he and his colleagues "will explore every avenue to ensure that transgendered people who want to serve in the California National Guard are afforded every opportunity to serve."

In January, the Supreme Court ruled that the Trump administration could begin enforcing its policy [restricting many transgender people from serving in the military](#) while legal challenges proceed through the lower courts. The court voted 5-4 to grant Justice Department requests to put on hold lower court orders that blocked the Trump administration from allowing the transgender military ban to take effect nationwide.