

# Gov. Kate Brown Refuses To Comply With President Trump's Transgender Military Policy

by **Meerah Powell** Follow OPB April 26, 2019 10 a.m.

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President Trump's policy excluding transgender people from the military officially went into effect earlier this month, though Gov. Kate Brown says the Oregon National Guard does not plan on participating.

The Trump administration's new policy disqualifies transgender men and women from enlisting in the military. Transgender people serving before the policy went into effect can continue to serve.

"I believe that our community members should be allowed to serve and that gender identity and sexual orientation should not be a barrier," Brown said. "I want to say thank you to our trans community that are stepping up and serving in the Oregon National Guard, and I just want the entire United States to know that we welcome you and support you here in this state."

Brown wrote a letter to the Oregon Military Department in 2017 when Trump was initially working on the policy, stating she would stand by Oregon law.

"I write this letter to clarify that the Oregon National Guard will continue to employ transgender service-members," she wrote. "That is the mandate of Oregon law and our values."

Oregon law declares it is an unlawful employment practice to refuse to hire someone or to bar or discharge someone from employment based on their sexual orientation — including their gender identity.

"As governor, I have directed state agencies to treat transgender Oregonians with equal dignity and respect," she wrote.

The Oregon Military Department had no specific response to the policy.

"We adhere to the policies of our elected officials, both state and federal," said Stephen Bomar, the department's director of public affairs. "As policies change, one thing is for certain — we will continue to be vigilant in our assigned jobs and when called on, be ready to support the people of Oregon and the United States."