

House to vote on measure opposing transgender military ban

By Cristina Marcos - 03/21/19 05:58 PM EDT

The House will vote next week on a resolution expressing opposition to the Trump administration's policy banning most transgender people from serving in the military, Majority Leader [Steny Hoyer](#) (D-Md.) announced Thursday.

The expected vote comes after the Pentagon said last week that it will [start enforcing the transgender military ban](#) starting in April. Under the policy, transgender people who join the military after the ban takes effect will have to serve as the gender they were assigned at birth.

Hoyer said in a statement that the transgender ban "weakens our national security by undermining our ability to recruit and retain the talented personnel we need."

The resolution, authored by Rep. [Joe Kennedy](#) III (D-Mass.), states that the House "strongly urges the Department of Defense to not reinstate [President Trump](#)'s ban on transgender members of the Armed Forces" and "rejects the flawed scientific and medical claims upon which it is based."

"By implementing a ban that ignores basic science, the sworn testimony of military leadership, and mountains of research, our President and his enablers will inject intolerance into our military, demean their sacrifice and cast doubt on our commitment to that promise," Kennedy said in a statement.

Trump first announced the policy in a series of tweets in July 2017.

"After consultations with my Generals and military experts, please be advised that the United States Government will not accept or allow Transgender individuals to serve in any capacity in the U.S. Military," Trump tweeted.

"Our military must be focused on decisive and overwhelming victory and cannot be burdened with the tremendous medical costs and disruption that transgender in the military would entail," he wrote.

Transgender troops had been serving openly since June 2016, when the Obama administration ended the previous ban.

Multiple lawsuits were filed to block the Trump administration from instituting a ban again. Lower courts in those cases issued injunctions blocking the policy from taking effect while the suits made their way through the court system.

The Pentagon issued its directive shortly after a court this month lifted the last order preventing the policy from going into effect. That came after the Supreme Court [ruled in January](#) backing the Trump administration's ability to enforce the policy.

While it would express opposition to the Trump administration instituting such a policy, the resolution set for a House floor vote next week does not explicitly block the Pentagon from moving forward with the ban.

Rep. [Jackie Speier](#) (D-Calif.) introduced legislation in February, which Kennedy co-sponsored, that would ensure transgender people can serve in the military and prevent individuals from being denied enlistment solely on the basis of gender identity.