October 10, 2017

The Honorable James N. Mattis
Secretary of Defense
U.S. Department of Defense
1000 Defense Pentagon
Washington, D.C. 20301

Mr. Secretary:

During a televised press conference on Thursday, August 10, 2017, President Trump said that he had been “doing the military a great favor” when he announced, via Twitter, that the government would not “accept or allow […] transgender individuals to serve in any capacity in the US military.” The president has since directed you to implement a form of that policy.

We request information about what discussions or correspondence between the White House and the Pentagon, if any, led President Trump to make his assertion. If senior military or Department of Defense personnel asked that the president ban transgender individuals from military service, we request access to any letters, e-mails, telephone transcripts, meeting logs and minutes, or other materials that document such requests. If the Department has records of any other discussions that might have justified the president’s claim, we request to see those materials, as well.

We seek access to these materials in order to determine whether the president, his national security team, and military leaders are actively coordinating policy with one another, or whether the president’s transgender ban announcement reflected a breakdown in communication. As you know, clear communication between the White House and the Pentagon is essential to our nation’s security.

We thank you for your consideration, and we look forward to receiving your reply.

Sincerely,

A. Donald McEachin
Member of Congress
Mark DeSaulnier  
Member of Congress

Michelle Lujan Grisham  
Member of Congress

Alma S. Adams  
Member of Congress

Ted W. Lieu  
Member of Congress

Val Demings  
Member of Congress

Colleen Hanabusa  
Member of Congress

Jamie Raskin  
Member of Congress

James P. McGovern  
Member of Congress

Tom O’Halleran  
Member of Congress

Salud Carbajal  
Member of Congress

Elizabeth H. Esty  
Member of Congress

Mike Thompson  
Member of Congress

Frank Pallone, Jr  
Member of Congress

Pramila Jayapal  
Member of Congress

Charlie Crist  
Member of Congress

Joseph P. Kennedy, III  
Member of Congress

Suzanne Bonamici  
Member of Congress
Anthony Brown  
Member of Congress

Kathleen M. Rice  
Member of Congress

Raúl M. Grijalva  
Member of Congress

Mark Takano  
Member of Congress

Tony Cardenas  
Member of Congress

Derek Kilmer  
Member of Congress

Bonnie Watson Coleman  
Member of Congress

Juan Vargas  
Member of Congress

Grace F. Napolitano  
Member of Congress

Adriano Espaillat  
Member of Congress

John K. Delaney  
Member of Congress

Niki Tsongas  
Member of Congress

Jared Polis  
Member of Congress

Kathy Castor  
Member of Congress

Yvette D. Clarke  
Member of Congress

Jerrold Nadler  
Member of Congress

Diana DeGette  
Member of Congress

Peter A. DeFazio  
Member of Congress
André Carson  
Member of Congress

Sheila Jackson Lee  
Member of Congress

Henry C. "Hank" Johnson Jr.  
Member of Congress

Betty McCollum  
Member of Congress

Stephen F. Lynch  
Member of Congress

Peter Welch  
Member of Congress

Tim Walz  
Member of Congress

Albio Sires  
Member of Congress

William R. Keating  
Member of Congress

Eleanor Holmes Norton  
Member of Congress

Gregory W. Meeks  
Member of Congress

David N. Cicilline  
Member of Congress

Barbara Lee  
Member of Congress

Nydia M. Velázquez  
Member of Congress

Carolyn B. Maloney  
Member of Congress

Linda T. Sánchez  
Member of Congress

Al Green  
Member of Congress

Alcee L. Hastings  
Member of Congress
José E. Serrano  
Member of Congress

Anna G. Eshoo  
Member of Congress

Alan Lowenthal  
Member of Congress

Brendan F. Boyle  
Member of Congress

Jimmy Panetta  
Member of Congress

Frederica S. Wilson  
Member of Congress

David E. Price  
Member of Congress

Darren Soto  
Member of Congress

Scott H. Peters  
Member of Congress

Ro Khanna  
Member of Congress

Daniel T. Kildee  
Member of Congress

Danny K. Davis  
Member of Congress

Chellie Pingree  
Member of Congress

Hakeem S. Jeffries  
Member of Congress

John A. Yarmuth  
Member of Congress

Pete Aguilar  
Member of Congress

Gerald E. Connolly  
Member of Congress

Donald Norcross  
Member of Congress
Sander M. Levin
Member of Congress

Ruben J. Kihuen
Member of Congress

Marc A. Veasey
Member of Congress

Tulsi Gabbard
Member of Congress

Zoe Lofgren
Member of Congress

Theodore E. Deutch
Member of Congress