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Media Contact: Jake Oliver, [jake@amatgerstein.com](mailto:jake@amatgerstein.com), 347 361 9983

## **Amida Care Condemns Ban on Transgender Americans Serving in the Military As Policy Goes Into Effect**

New York, NY (April 12, 2019) –Today, the Trump Administration’s ban on transgender Americans serving in the military will take effect. Amida Care, a New York State Medicaid Special Needs Health Plan (SNP) and advocate for transgender health, supports efforts to defeat the ban.

“Discrimination of any kind has no place in our military or our society. This policy is an insult to all of our transgender service members who have answered the call to serve this country,” said Doug Wirth, President and CEO of Amida Care. “To all the brave Americans of transgender experience who have served our country faithfully, we salute you and pledge to continue to fight for your rights. We are hopeful that when the 9<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court of Appeals reviews the legality of this discriminatory policy, it will be overturned.”

Amida Care recently released *Breaking Barriers to Transgender Health*, a report detailing the barriers to health care faced by Americans of transgender experience. The report outlines recommendations to address the health care needs of transgender individuals and social factors such as housing and employment that influence health outcomes. The report can be viewed [here](#).

Currently, 15,000 transgender individuals serve in the military. [One in five transgender Americans](#) have served at some point in their life -- double the percentage of the general U.S. population. [Existing evidence shows](#) that the inclusion of transgender individuals in the service has no significant impact on military readiness and, in reality, benefits the military by creating an inclusive and diverse workforce.

In January of this year, the Supreme Court ruled in a 5-4 decision that the Trump Administration’s ban could be enforced. The Court did not, however, rule on the legality of the ban, and will do so after the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals issues their ruling.

President Trump has previously cited medical costs as one of the reasons behind the transgender policy. However, a [2016 RAND study](#) found that the medical costs of transgender service members represented a very small portion of the military's overall health care expenses. According to the study, care for transgender service members would represent between 0.005 to 0.017 percent of overall Department of Defense health care expenditures.

“Despite what President Trump and his administration would have you believe, this attack on the transgender community isn’t based on financial or medical concerns at all -- it’s just old-fashioned bigotry,” Wirth added.

### **About Amida Care**

Amida Care Inc. is a Medicaid not-for-profit health plan that specializes in providing comprehensive health coverage and coordinated care to New Yorkers living with or at elevated risk for HIV. For more information, visit [www.amidacareny.org](http://www.amidacareny.org).