

DEOMI News Highlights

DEOMI News Highlights is a weekly compilation of published items and commentary with a focus on equal opportunity, equal employment opportunity, diversity, culture, and human relations issues. DEOMI News Highlights is also a management tool intended to serve the informational needs of equity professionals and senior DOD officials in the continuing assessment of defense policies, programs, and actions. Further reproduction or redistribution for private use or gain is subject to original copyright restrictions.

Judge Orders Pentagon To Stop Discriminating Against Naturalized Citizen Soldiers [Richard Gonzales, *NPR*, 2 February 2019]

- A federal judge in Seattle has ordered the Defense Department to stop discriminating against naturalized citizens who volunteered to serve in the U.S. Army under a program to attract certain immigrants with specialized skills.
- U.S. District Judge Thomas Zilly [ruled](#) Thursday that the Pentagon may not require soldiers who are naturalized citizens to undergo “continuous monitoring,” or security checks every two years, when such scrutiny is not applied to U.S.-born soldiers.
- The plaintiffs are 17 naturalized citizens who enlisted through the Military Accessions Vital to the National Interest (MAVNI) program. [Begun in 2009](#), the program recruits immigrants with critical foreign language or medical skills in exchange for a fast track to citizenship. More than 10,000 soldiers have served in the U.S. military through the MAVNI program. The program was [frozen in 2016](#) due to security concerns.
[Judge Orders Pentagon To Stop Discriminating Against Naturalized Citizen Soldiers](#)

Lawmakers aim to reverse Trump’s ban on transgender troops [Leo Shane III, *Military Times*, 7 February 2019]

- A bipartisan group of House and Senate lawmakers introduced new legislation Thursday designed to block President Donald Trump’s rules regarding [transgender troops](#) by removing any limits to their service.
- The move comes about two weeks after a [Supreme Court ruling](#) upheld new Defense Department rules on transgender troops. In a 5-4 decision, the justices ruled that the administration may move ahead with a ban on transgender recruits.
- In 2016, then-President Barack Obama announced that transgender individuals in the military would be allowed to serve openly and receive medical services for gender reassignment surgery. He also set a July 2017 target for allowing enlistment of new transgender recruits.
[Lawmakers aim to reverse Trump’s ban on transgender troops](#)

Top Enlisted Military Leaders Pressed on Unsafe Housing, Sex Assault [Patricia Kime, *Military.com*, 7 February 2019]

- Members of a House subcommittee on Thursday chided senior leaders of the Army and Air Force for failing to provide safe housing for military families, and urged all services to work harder to reduce sexual assault in their ranks.
- In a hearing on military quality-of-life issues, Democrats and Republicans on the House Appropriations Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies Subcommittee faulted the services for failing to provide oversight of the private companies that manage base housing, leading to problems with [mold](#) on Air Force bases and [lead poisoning](#) among children on some Army posts.
- Another issue raised by the panel was sexual assault in the military. The Defense Department in January released a report finding that incidents of sexual assault were up by 50 percent over the course of two years at the nation’s military academies—a “devastating portrait of the conduct that is occurring” at the schools, [Florida Democrat Debbie] Wasserman Schultz said.
[Top Enlisted Military Leaders Pressed on Unsafe Housing, Sex Assault](#)

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Culture

[This Marine went from the ballet to the battlefield — and back again](#)
[Researchers seek fuller picture of first Africans in America](#)

Discrimination

[Judge Orders Pentagon To Stop Discriminating Against Naturalized Citizen Soldiers](#)

Diversity

[‘The American dream is real’: Once a desperate refugee, now a US Army general](#)
[Commentary: Military legacy is rich with African-American contributions](#)
[For 3rd Month in a Row, Female Veteran Unemployment Rate Lower than Men’s](#)
[‘Higher, further, faster’: Air Force names first female fighter pilot to command F-16 Viper team](#)
[Lawmakers aim to reverse Trump’s ban on transgender troops](#)
[New Emojis Are Coming: Interracial Couples, Guide Dogs, Falafel and More](#)
[New Jersey to require schools to teach LGBT history](#)
[Support for Making VA Motto Gender-Neutral May Be Fading](#)

Miscellaneous

[The Air Force is the only service that decreased its number of suicides in 2018](#)
[Amazon says facial recognition tech should ‘not violate civil rights’](#)
[Army aims for more combat-ready troops with new fitness test](#)
[Army Recruiters Are Making Progress Connecting with Gen-Z, Generals Say](#)
[Army secretary seeks to help families through fewer moves, spouse job opportunities](#)
[Her texts urged a boyfriend to kill himself. A judge just upheld her conviction.](#)
[MacDill penalizes base housing operator over mold as Bilirakis launches congressional inquiry](#)
[Pentagon Launches Prescription Monitoring Program to Curb Substance Abuse](#)
[Retired SEAL: Tracking Special Operators’ Performance May Help Prevent Suicides](#)
[Suicides among active-duty soldiers are up about 20 percent](#)
[Top Enlisted Military Leaders Pressed on Unsafe Housing, Sex Assault](#)
[Veterans are committing suicide in VA parking lots: report](#)

Misconduct

[Grave consequences’: Federal lawsuit filed against Penn State frat in Tim Piazza death](#)
[Naked, drunken sailor found in Japanese home, reports say](#)
[Navy prosecuting alleged sailor swindler](#)
[Suspected pedophile fired by Wright-Patterson after working there for nine months](#)
[Tumultuous’: Virginia politics in chaos amid Northam, Fairfax and Herring scandals](#)
[War crimes prosecution against Navy SEALs takes a double hit](#)

Racism

[A Complicated Racial History Underpins Politics In Virginia](#)
[White domestic terrorists threatened this city of refugees, here’s what happened next](#)

Sexual Assault/Harassment

[Facing up to 30 years, Air Force Academy cadet gets 75 days for sexual assault](#)
[A Florida politician allegedly made a habit of licking men’s faces. She has now resigned.](#)
[Sisterhood Is Powerful](#)

[Virginia Lt. Gov. Fairfax acknowledges 2004 consensual encounter with accuser, denies sexual assault](#)