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Joseph Biden

President, United States of America

Kamala Harris

Vice President, United States of America

Re: Congratulations; LGBT military/veterans' rights

President Biden, Vice President Harris,

American Veterans for Equal Rights (AVER) is our nation's LGBT veterans' service organization advocating for the rights and benefits of our veterans, reservists, and active service members. On behalf of our members and National board, I would like to heartily congratulate you on becoming America's President and Vice President. As a woman of hispanic heritage, and as a veteran, I am both inspired and hopeful for our country. AVER stands ready to support the new administration in its effort to lead and unify the nation towards a more equitable future for all Americans.

In the previous Obama-Biden administration, Congressional legislation repealing the Don't Ask Don't Tell policy, ensured the right of Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Americans to serve our country in freedom and equality. Executive orders went a long way to ensuring the same rights for Transgender American patriots who have served our nation valiantly since the Civil War, in great personal peril to themselves.

We were greatly heartened by your new administration's statements on your first day in office, assuring us regarding your intention to give equal rights to Transgender Americans and those who want to serve in our armed forces. We urge you to guarantee full equal rights and benefits to Transgender volunteers to serve openly and proudly, including full medical benefits. We wish to remind you that our Transgender veterans are still denied benefits such as sexual reassignment surgery provided by the Veterans Administration. We urge you to rectify these discriminatory policies first by Executive Order followed by Congressional legislation.

Thank you again for boldly stepping forward to lead our nation.

Sincerely,

Julz Carey, Chief Petty Officer (Ret), United States Coast Guard

President, American Veterans For Equal Rights AVER.us