



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 22, 2019

Media Contact: Shakira Croce, Assistant Director of Communications
scroce@amidacareny.org, (646) 757-7052

Amida Care Condemns Supreme Court Decision Allowing Ban on Transgender Americans Serving in the Military

New York, NY (January 22, 2019) – Today, in a 5-4 decision, the Supreme Court allowed the Trump administration’s discriminatory ban on transgender Americans serving in the military to be enforced. The Court did not agree to review the legality of the ban until after the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals issues a ruling. Doug Wirth, President and CEO of Amida Care, the largest Medicaid Special Needs Health Plan (SNP) in New York State and advocate for transgender health, issued the following statement in response:

“Today’s ruling from the highest court in our land allows the Trump administration to discriminate against brave Americans who are willing to put their lives on the line in service to our country,” said Wirth. “This ruling is an insult to the American ideals of equality and justice and to all of our transgender service members who have faced unwarranted and discriminatory barriers for too long.”

Currently, 15,000 transgender men and women 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 has no significant impact on military readiness and, in reality, benefits the military by creating an inclusive and diverse workforce.

President Trump has previously cited medical costs as one of the reasons behind this decision. 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.

“Discrimination has no place in our military or our society,” Wirth added. “Despite what President Trump 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. We are hopeful that when the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals completes the review of this policy, it will be overturned for good, and the rights of transgender Americans who want to go above and beyond to offer their lives in service to their country will be upheld.”

About Amida Care

Amida Care Inc. is a not-for-profit health plan that specializes in providing comprehensive health coverage and coordinated care to New Yorkers with chronic conditions, including HIV and behavioral health disorders, and people who are of transgender experience or who are homeless (regardless of HIV status). Amida Care has a wide network of health care providers throughout New York City and is the largest Medicaid Special Needs Health Plan (SNP) in New York State. For more information, visit www.amidacareny.org.