

VFW Salutes LGBTQ+ Military Service to the Nation

LGBTQ+ veterans ensured the rights of all Americans would one day be secure

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WASHINGTON — The Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) stands with our fellow Americans in recognizing and honoring lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ+) veterans, service members and military families for Pride Month.

Since 1884, every person who has ever raised their right hand to swear or affirm an oath to support the Constitution of the United States, also said that they will ‘bear true faith and allegiance to the same.’ This deeply personal pledge unites each service member in the founding document’s endeavor towards establishing justice, domestic tranquility, common defense, and general welfare. These ‘Blessings of Liberty’ are the right for every American, no matter their race, religion, ethnicity, gender, or sexual orientation. ‘We the people’ who have ever worn the uniform of our country, served, sacrificed, fought, bled, and even died to ensure those rights would one day be secured for everyone.

It is estimated that there are a little more than 1 million LGBTQ+ veterans in the United States. Since the *Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell Repeal Act of 2010*, surveys have found that more than 5% of active-duty service members identify as part of the LGBTQ+ community. They are counted among the less than one percent who serve or have served in the U.S. military. They are among us, counted with us, and are one of us. They have earned and deserve the same dignity, respect, honor, treatment, health care, and benefits that is owed to everyone who has served. When it comes to LGBTQ+ military men and women – no one can question their love of our country and their identity as patriotic Americans.

The 1.5 million members of the VFW and its Auxiliary salute all LGBTQ+ veterans, past, present, and future, and say “thank you” for your service to our great nation.

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