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DISPARITIES IN PAY

(Ms. PLASKETT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. PLASKETT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to talk about the disparities in pay between men and women in this country.

Today, women are paid only 80 cents for every dollar paid to men, resulting in a gap of \$10,169 each year. The gap exists in every State, regardless of geography, occupation, education, or work patterns.

This disparity is worse for women of color. On average, Hispanic women are typically paid 53 cents; Native American women, 58 cents; and Black women, 61 cents for every dollar paid to White, non-Hispanic men.

The Paycheck Fairness Act would help to close these punishing gaps by eliminating loopholes in the Equal Pay Act.

The wage gap between America's men and women denies women \$900 billion in income each year. Across the country, this disparity directly affects children. In my district of the Virgin Islands, 32 percent of families with children live in poverty. Of that number, 76 percent are headed by a single mother.

We know that families who live in poverty have higher rates of instability and that children living in poverty perform worse in school than their counterparts. By paying each woman the \$10,000 they lose per annum to the wage gap, we can do the right thing, and the fiscally responsible thing, and raise millions of families above the poverty line.

OPPOSING BAN ON TRANSGENDER MEMBERS OF ARMED FORCES

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 252, I call up the resolution (H. Res. 124) expressing opposition to banning service in the Armed Forces by openly transgender individuals, and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia). Pursuant to House Resolution 252, the resolution is considered read.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 124

Whereas, on July 26, 2017, President Trump announced via Twitter that the United States Government would reverse the existing policy of allowing transgender servicemembers to serve openly in order to implement a ban on transgender people from serving in the Armed Forces;

Whereas transgender servicemembers have served openly since 2016, bravely defending our Nation with distinction while preserving unit cohesion and contributing to military readiness;

Whereas a 2016 study by the RAND Corporation found that allowing transgender

Americans to serve openly in the Armed Forces would “have minimal impact on readiness and health care costs” and “little or no impact on unit cohesion, operational effectiveness or readiness”;

Whereas thousands of transgender Americans currently serve actively in the Armed Forces and in the Reserves throughout all branches and military occupational specialties;

Whereas the American Medical Association, the American Psychological Association, the American Psychiatric Association, and three former military Surgeons General each have affirmed the medical efficacy of transition-related care and have expressed opposition to President Trump's discriminatory ban;

Whereas the claims attempting to justify President Trump's ban are based on flawed scientific and medical assertions;

Whereas the Department of Defense report from 2018 falsely asserts there is “considerable scientific uncertainty” regarding the efficacy of transition-related care;

Whereas there is a global medical consensus that such care is effective, safe, and reliable;

Whereas the Department of Defense has failed to provide evidence the existing policy has impaired morale, unit readiness, or unit cohesion;

Whereas all five military Chiefs of Staff have testified publicly that the existing policy has had no adverse effect on military readiness;

Whereas, on August 1, 2017, fifty-six retired generals and admirals released a statement affirming, “This proposed ban, if implemented, would cause significant disruptions, deprive the military of mission-critical talent, and compromise the integrity of transgender troops who would be forced to live a lie, as well as non-transgender peers who would be forced to choose between reporting their comrades or disobeying policy”;

Whereas at least 18 nations allow transgender people to serve openly and effectively in their armed forces;

Whereas transgender members of the Armed Forces have fought in defense of our freedoms with honor and distinction since our Nation's founding and have been bestowed with such commendations and awards as the Bronze Star and Purple Heart for their courage and sacrifices;

Whereas President Trump's ban on transgender members of the Armed Forces targets and stigmatizes a whole class of people; and

Whereas President Trump's ban on transgender members of the Armed Forces would affect all transgender members of the Armed Forces and force them to serve under a policy that stigmatizes and devalues their contributions to our Nation's defense: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) strongly opposes President Trump's discriminatory ban on transgender members of the Armed Forces;

(2) rejects the flawed scientific and medical claims upon which it is based; and

(3) strongly urges the Department of Defense to not reinstate President Trump's ban on transgender members of the Armed Forces and to maintain an inclusive policy allowing qualified transgender Americans to enlist and serve in the Armed Forces.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The resolution shall be debatable for 1 hour, equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Armed Services.

The gentleman from Washington (Mr. SMITH) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. THORNBERRY) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Washington.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on H. Res. 124.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Washington?

There was no objection.

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 5 minutes.

Mr. Speaker, this resolution is very straightforward. The Department of Defense, in cooperation with the White House, recently issued a policy, which will be implemented in a couple weeks, that would, effectively, bar transgender people from being able to serve in the military. We have this resolution to reject that policy. It is that simple and that straightforward.

We believe the policy that the Pentagon is putting forward is unfair, based on ignorance and bigotry, and will actually harm national security. We ask the House, in this resolution, to express the sense of Congress that we oppose this policy from the Pentagon.

Again, what this policy is primarily based on is ignorance and bias against the transgender community. The policies being implemented will make it virtually impossible for them to serve in the military. This is unfair discrimination, and it is also harmful to national security.

The Army last year failed to meet its recruitment quotas. It is a constant challenge in the military to find the people who have the character, the capability, and the ability to serve in our military.

We have the best military in the history of the world. We need high-qualified people to serve. To single out a particular group of people, to discriminate against them and say that they cannot serve, not because they can't meet the qualifications—it is not because they can't run fast enough or shoot straight enough or work hard enough—to be a member of the military, but because of something that literally has nothing to do with their ability to do their job, is bad for national security and is unfair discrimination.

We have heard a lot from people about how difficult it is for unit cohesion to have transgender people in the military, a whole bunch of arguments. The only problem with that is the military leaders who have actually been responsible for this—and I am just going to read one quote. There are many, and some of my colleagues will say it as well.

Army Chief of Staff Milley, who is about to become the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, last year said