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MVA: VA Headway To Address LGBTQ Discrimination Welcome First Step
Minority Veterans to Benefit from New Policies Surrounding Care for LGBTQ Veterans

WASHINGTON, DC (February 23, 2021) – Today, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) announced a plan to comprehensively review all policies relating to the care of LGBTQ veterans, family members, caregivers, survivors, and employees. This review will encompass a full assessment of current policies to identify and address systemic discrimination and necessary areas for change in order to create a more welcoming and safe VA for all veterans. In response to this announcement, Minority Veterans of America (MVA) Executive Director, Lindsay Church released the following statement.

“Today’s announcement by VA is long overdue but welcome news. MVA is glad to see the Biden administration build on their commitment to ensuring LGBTQ servicemembers, veterans, employees, and their families are treated with the respect, honor, and equality they deserve. This is especially impactful for trans veterans who have long been denied access to lifesaving gender affirmation surgeries due to VA’s long-held ban,” **Lindsay Church said**. “By reversing the inhumane trans military ban in his first days, President Biden set a precedent that we expect to continue throughout his administration.”

They continued, “While today’s memo from Secretary McDonough is momentum towards rebuilding trust within the community that has eroded over the last several years, there is still so much work left to do. We must continue to work towards ending discriminatory practices at VA and establish strong, system-wide plans to make VA a welcoming space where all veterans, no matter their gender identity or sexual orientation, can access the full range of VA care, free from all barriers. We appreciate Secretary McDonough and his team for showing VA’s commitment to expediency in addressing the needs of minority veterans that face systemic discrimination and oppression as a result of discriminatory policies. MVA looks forward to working closely with Sec. McDonough and VA to build on this strong foundation and move forward towards a more equitable VA for all.”

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Minority Veterans of America (MVA) is a non-partisan, non-profit organization that was designed to create belonging and advance equity and justice for underrepresented veterans, including BIPOC, women, LGBTQ, and religious minority veterans. The organization aims to transform the narrative of the American veteran by building an interconnected community, fostering greater understanding of our memberships’ identities, and serving minority veterans through the development of targeted programming and advocacy. For more information, visit www.minorityvets.org.