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**Leaders from the Gay Men’s Chorus of Los Angeles and Los Angeles’
LGBTQ Community Quickly Strike Back at President Trump for
“Deeply Offensive” Transgender Military Ban**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

(LOS ANGELES) – JULY 26, 2017 – Leaders from one of the largest LGBTQ Arts organizations in the nation, the Gay Men’s Chorus of Los Angeles, struck back hard this afternoon at President Donald J. Trump following his discriminatory announcement on Twitter that he was immediately rolling back protections to the LGBTQ community by effectively banning all Transgender Americans from serving in the United States military “in any capacity.”

In a chain of quickly fired-off tweets from President Trump Wednesday morning, the president announced that he was reversing an Obama-era policy allowing Transgender individuals to openly serve in the U.S. military. “After consultation with my Generals and military experts, please be advised that the United States government will not accept or allow Transgender individuals to serve in any capacity in the U.S. Military,” he tweeted.

Executive Director Jonathan Weedman; West Hollywood City Councilman, Mayor Pro Tempore and GMCLA Board Chair John Duran; and GMCLA Artistic Director Dr. Joseph Nadeau swiftly spoke out offering strict condemnation of the President’s announcement.

Says Weedman, “The Gay Men’s Chorus of Los Angeles stands in solidarity with our Transgender brothers and sisters, and strongly condemns and opposes the policy announcement from the White House today that bans Transgender individuals from serving in the United States Military. The actions by the administration are blatantly discriminatory and deeply offensive to us, and in direct contradiction with the values of equality, access, fairness and justice upon which the United States was founded.”

He continues, “As one of America’s leading and most distinguished LGBT Arts Organizations, GMCLA has always stood for civil rights and social justice and we sing to spread a message of hope and love to all. Today’s announcement only further strengthens our resolve to continue in the fight for those who have been harmed by this kind of narrow, mean-spirited, bigoted and discriminatory action. We stand with our Transgender brothers

and sisters on this sad day, and pledge to you our love and unconditional and unwavering support while we continue the fight against bigotry and discrimination everywhere.”

“The impulses of Donald Trump wreak havoc on so many lives,” said Duran. “Thousands of transgender service members are suddenly terminated on a whim – despite the fact that a Republican Congress and Pentagon were moving forward with integration plans. His reactionary policies that attempt to reverse Obama policies cause much pain for Americans. GMCLA will continue to work towards a more just society with our transgender sisters and brothers and we will raise our voices in song and protest as we have always done.”

GMCLA’s reaction to the reinstatement of the transgender military ban comes on the heels of its “I Rise” concert earlier this month, which served to mark a new path forward of partnership and inclusion with hands being joined across various aisles of difference, including representatives from more than 25 different communities of faith, as well as those from across the LGBTQ spectrum. The event was lauded for “building bridges across chasms of misunderstanding.”

“I Rise” was the brainchild of longtime GMCLA Artistic Director Dr. Joseph Nadeau,” whom also strongly criticized President Trump today for his hostile announcement.

“To serve in the U.S. military is one of the most honorable and selfless acts for any American,” says Nadeau. “To deny trans people the opportunity to serve openly in the U.S. Armed Forces weakens our military strength and is insulting to the thousands of trans people currently serving. We strongly oppose the President’s stance on banning trans people from serving in the military.”

For more information, visit www.gmcla.org, or call (424) 239-6514.

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About Gay Men’s Chorus of Los Angeles (GMCLA)

GMCLA has garnered international acclaim for artistic excellence while remaining deeply rooted in service to the Los Angeles community and beyond by promoting civil rights, tolerance and acceptance through music. Founded in 1979 during the emergence of the gay civil rights movement, critics have proclaimed the chorus “inspired,” “expressive, innovative, and utterly moving,” and hailed it for presenting “meaningful entertainment.”