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Breaking into the military's 'band of brothers'

December 14, 2012

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crew safe even after I was shot. Once on the ground, I stood shoulder to shoulder with my crew, all men, trading fire with the enemy, and I was never treated as inferior. We were all looking out for one another. Give more capable women the chance, and they, too, will be accepted into the "band of brothers."

I am party to a [lawsuit](#) that is intended to free the armed forces to appoint the best people possible to critical positions, regardless of gender. The current policy prevents commanders from integrating women into combat positions, even when they are the best people for the job.

All over the world, women are putting their lives on the line for their country. They deserve an equal chance to serve to the best of their ability and to have an equal opportunity to compete.

Mary Jennings Hegar, Round Rock, Tex.

The writer, a major in the Air National Guard, is a plaintiff in the *Hegar et al. v. Panetta* case, which is challenging the U.S. military's prohibition on women serving in combat positions.

Regarding Gregory D. Foster's Dec. 12 letter, "[The military's distorted logic](#)":

I served in the military for more than 35 years in various assignments and positions, and I believe that the current leadership has made strides in recognizing the merits of women serving in all branches.

Women have served honorably and with distinction. Their service in roles that often put them in harm's way is appreciated and admired by their peers and superiors.

There is no better organization in the United States than the military at giving equal opportunity to all.

Ronald L. Baker, Springfield

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keep wapo free wrote:

12/15/2012 8:44 AM CST

I think it's telling that the letter praising the military for it's strides in gender equality come from a man. As a women vet, my eperiences were not nearly so glowing.

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