

**PRESS RELEASE**

May 23, 2013

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**U.S. COMMISSION ON CIVIL RIGHTS ANNOUNCES  
NEW LOCATION FOR MAY 31, 2013 BRIEFING ON  
PROTECTING THE CIVIL RIGHTS OF OUR VETERANS AND SERVICE  
MEMBERS**

**WASHINGTON, DC** - The United States Commission on Civil Rights announces that it will hold a briefing to examine whether the Federal Government is adequately protecting the civil rights of our veterans and service members who have fought for our country. The briefing will take place on Friday, May 31, 2013 from 9:30 AM ET to 3:00 PM ET at the Washington Marriott at Metro Center, Grand Ballroom, 775 12th Street NW, Washington DC. There will be a one-hour break for lunch from 12:30 to 1:30 PM.

It is expected that between 2011 and 2016 more than one million service members will leave the armed forces and return home. Returning military veterans will likely face competition in our labor and housing markets and could potentially experience discrimination, based on disabilities acquired as a result of service-related injuries, along with, employment and housing discrimination. Female veterans with children are also likely to experience discrimination in housing programs due to the fact that most of the established housing programs for veterans do not allow children. The Commission will seek to gather information on the difficulties being experienced by veterans and service members alike with the hope of being able to identify best practices for helping our veterans transition from the battlefield to the workforce and their community.

The Commission will hear from experts in three panels:

**Panel 1 – Federal Government**

**9:30 am – 11:00 am**

- Robert Jesse, Principle Deputy Under Secretary for Health  
Department of Veterans Affairs
- Kenan Torrans  
Deputy Director, Office of National Programs  
Veterans' Employment and Training Service  
Department of Labor
- Sharon Alexander, Special Assistant to Chairwoman Berrien  
Equal Employment Opportunity Commission
- Bryan Greene  
General Deputy Assistant Secretary for Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity  
Department of Housing and Urban Development

- Matt Boehmer, Acting Director, Federal Voting and Assistance Program  
Department of Defense

**Panel 2 – Advocacy Groups**

**11:00 am – 12:30 pm**

- Heather Ansley, Vice President of Veterans Policy  
VetsFirst and Co-Chair of the Consortium of Citizens with Disabilities Veterans Task Force
- Albert Gonzales, National Commander  
American GI Forum
- Wendy McClinton, President and CEO  
Black Veterans for Social Justice
- Danny Ingram, National President  
American Veterans for Equal Rights

**Panel 3 – Experts**

**1:30 pm – 3:00 pm**

- Major Kamal Kalsi  
U.S. Army
- Sandra Strickland  
Final Salute, Inc.
- Elspeth Ritchie, Chief Medical Officer  
District of Columbia Department of Mental Health
- Joseph Violante, National Legislative Director  
Disabled American Veterans

Written comments from the public will be accepted by email at [publiccomments@usccr.gov](mailto:publiccomments@usccr.gov) until June 30, 2013. Public comments received will become part of the public record.

Deaf or hearing-impaired persons who will attend the meeting and require the services of a sign-language interpreter should contact Pam Dunston at (202) 376-8105 at least seven business days prior to the briefing.

The U.S. Commission on Civil Rights is an independent, bipartisan agency charged with monitoring federal civil rights enforcement. Members include Chairman Martin R. Castro and Commissioners Roberta Achtenberg, Todd Gaziano, Gail Heriot, Peter Kirsanow, David Kladney, Abigail Thernstrom, and Michael Yaki. Commission meetings and briefings are open to the general public. The Commission's website is <http://www.usccr.gov>.