

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20510

June 5, 2023

The Honorable Denis R. McDonough
Secretary
U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
810 Vermont Avenue Northwest
Washington, D.C. 20420

Secretary McDonough,

We write today to express our deep concern that the Biloxi National Cemetery, a Department of Veterans Affairs facility located in Harrison County, Mississippi, has chosen to fly an LGBT "Pride" flag throughout the month of June, on a pole normally reserved for an American flag. Mississippi residents learned of this change on Memorial Day, a day that should have been dedicated to honoring those who made the ultimate sacrifice to ensure our freedom. We believe this decision shows deep disrespect to our service members, veterans, and their families, and demand that you take immediate action to restore the United States flag to its rightful place at Veterans Affairs facilities across the state of Mississippi.

Replacing the United States flag with a flag that promotes a particular sexual or gender identity goes against the very mission of our national cemeteries. These sites were established to be a shrine "sacred to the honor and memory of those interred or memorialized there." Cemeteries should be places for reflection and respect, not public virtue signaling.

This political stunt is yet another example of this Administration's willingness to promote its political agenda rather than focus on its mission as the executive branch. Our veterans expect the Department of Veterans Affairs to provide services, not promote controversial ideologies.

We demand that you direct the Biloxi National Cemetery and other Veterans Affairs facilities to remove the LGBT Pride flag and reinstate the United States flag in its rightful place.

Sincerely,



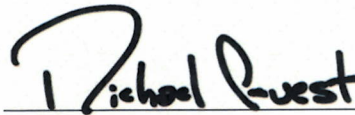
ROGER F. WICKER
United States Senator



CINDY HYDE-SMITH
United States Senator



MIKE EZELL
Member of Congress



MICHAEL GUEST
Member of Congress



TRENT KELLY
Member of Congress