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Inside Track

Americans Too Obese or Criminal to Join Armed Forces



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The fact that many potential recruits for the U.S. Army are too obese or criminal is adding to historic low recruitment numbers not seen since the end of the Vietnam War.

Lieutenant General Xavier Brunson, the commander of Joint Base Lewis-McChord in Washington state, told *The Spokesman-Review* on September 6 that recruitment is so low that the Army won't meet its goal for 2022 of 485,000, falling short by a staggering 20,000 recruits.

One reason recruitment numbers are down is that fitness issues are causing dwindling interest in military service. The growing sedentary lifestyle of young Americans has led to an obesity crisis. "Overweight and obesity among service members rose 73% from 2011 to 2015," according to the CDC, and these individuals are less likely to be medically ready to deploy.

However, even with the challenges of achieving recruitment goals, Brunson remains optimistic that the nation's young people will still see value in serving — it's just a matter of figuring out how to overcome the obstacles in the recruitment process.

"Some of the challenges we have are obesity, we have pre-existing medical conditions, we have behavioral health problems, we have criminality, people with felonies, and we have drug use," Brunson said. "This is not an Army problem; this is an American problem."

"The Army needs to enlist the help of key community influencers who can educate young people about military service and 'lower the gates' of the Army by meeting those interested in serving halfway," Brunson said.

The Army says it plans to focus on three principles in its increased recruitment efforts — maintaining its existing standards, focusing on quality rather than quantity, and investing in the youth of America.

However, finding quality recruits is a growing concern. In June, Army Chief of Staff General James McConville testified before Congress that only 23 percent of Americans ages 17-24 are qualified to serve without a waiver to join, down from 29 percent in recent years.

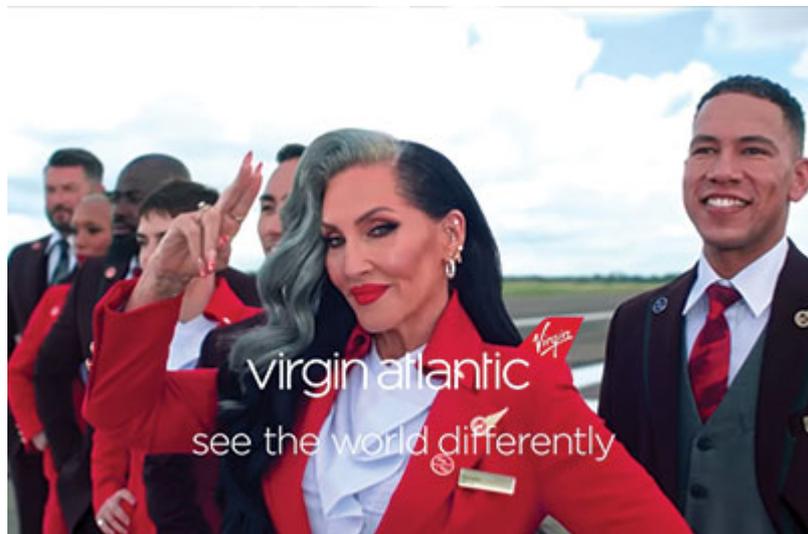


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— David Kelly

Virgin Atlantic Kowtows to “Gender” Ideologues



[youtube/VirginAtlantic](https://www.youtube.com/VirginAtlantic)

Virgin Atlantic airline is going all-in on the “transgender” agenda — and boasting about it.

The Washington Times reported September 28 that the “company announced its updated gender identity policy in a [September 27] press release, which will let LGBT employees of the airline choose between the bright red blazer and skirt formerly donned only by its female employees or the dark burgundy suit and tie that its male staff had worn exclusively before.”

The airline states that this “cements its position as the most inclusive airline in the skies,” is “part of an on-going drive to champion the individuality of its people and customers,” and is “complemented by the roll out of optional pronoun badges for all its people and those travelling with the airline.”

“Virgin Atlantic has also updated its ticketing systems to allow for those who hold passports with gender neutral gender markers to select ‘U’ or ‘X’ gender codes on their booking as well as the gender-neutral title, ‘Mx,’” the company further explains.

Touting the policies, Juha Jarvinen, Virgin Atlantic’s chief commercial officer, said, it’s “so important that we enable our people to embrace their individuality and be their true selves at work. It is for that reason that we want to allow our people to wear the uniform that best suits them and how they identify and ensure our customers are addressed by their preferred pronouns.”

One matter unexplained in the release or the ensuing reportage, however, is, if “sex” is a continuum and should be subordinated to “gender,” and gender is a social construct, why is the airline retaining the standard of having two different uniform styles born of a bigoted era that subscribed to the notion of binary sex? Why not reach for the heavens of enlightenment and ditch the bright red blazer and skirt and the dark burgundy suit and tie in favor of a uniform, communist-like, olive-green outfit?

— Selwyn Duke

California Now “Sanctuary State” for Kids Seeking Sex



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Changes



AP Images

California Governor Gavin Newsom on September 29 signed into law a bill giving his state custody over any child who enters its borders, even electronically, in search of sex-change treatments, regardless of the wishes of the child's parents.

The "gender-affirming health care" law, SB-107, gives California courts "temporary emergency custody" over any child who travels to the Golden State to obtain hormones, drugs, surgery, or other medical interventions to give the child the appearance of the opposite sex. It also protects any adults who accompany the child.

The law prohibits California courts from enforcing out-of-state subpoenas demanding information from healthcare providers about sex-change treatments given to minors over whom those states have jurisdiction.

In addition, it bars law enforcement from arresting or extraditing anyone "pursuant to an out-of-state arrest warrant for violation of another state's law against providing, receiving, or allowing a child to receive gender-affirming health care and gender-affirming mental health care in this state, if that care is lawful under the laws of this state, to the fullest extent permitted by federal law."

In other words, Newsom has "awarded himself custody of every child struggling with gender dysphoria, elected himself governor of every state to thwart their own laws that might protect children from harmful and sterilizing gender 'transitions,' and dared the entire nation to do anything about it," Craig DeRoche, CEO and president of the Family Policy Alliance, said in a September 30 statement.

Newsom claims the law is about "parental choice" in the face of other states' laws restricting gender-transition treatments for minors. "Parents know what's best for their kids," he said, "and they should be able to make decisions around the health of their children without fear."

SB-107, however, takes such decisions out of parents' hands and places them squarely in the hands of minors (and allied adults). Individuals the state of California believes are unfit to drive a car, vote, or buy cigarettes are, it seems, perfectly capable of making life-altering medical decisions.

— Michael Tennant



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Barna: Most of America's Foundational Values Remain in Place



SimonSkafar/iStock/Getty Images Plus

Two polls conducted under the auspices of pollster George Barna — the results of which were released September 14 — reveal that, despite decades of withering and deliberate attacks, many if not most of America's most cherished values remain in place.

Barna, who heads up the Cultural Research Center at Arizona Christian University (ACU), wrote, "Recent national surveys have reported that Americans no longer trust most politicians or either of the major political parties, and believe the media are fanning the flames of division. Americans also believe the country is moving in the wrong direction and fear for the future of the [country]."

The two polls, conducted online in July and involving nearly 4,000 respondents, offered four dozen different value statements and learned that topping the list of values Americans cherish the most is family. The study ranked just how strongly respondents felt about each category, including "fight for/die for," "sacrifice resources for," "argue in support of," "do not feel strongly about," and "would not defend."

Eighty percent of those quizzed said that family was worth fighting or dying for, or sacrificing resources to preserve and strengthen. Other values respondents strongly supported were justice, integrity, character, and the ownership of private property.

The values offered by the Left through movies, TV, talk shows, and mainstream media — such as unconstrained sex, unrestrained entertainment, public recognition of fame, and strong government — were among the least appealing to the respondents.

Barna noted, "Despite the nation's progressive elites constantly pushing for permissiveness, tolerance, indulgence, and pervasive equality, a minority of Americans place significant value on the likes of universal empowerment, cultural diversity, economic equality, and tolerance."

He added, "When we consider the values on which America was built, it is encouraging to find that a handful of the values embraced by early Americans remains intact: family, financial cautiousness, hard work, humility, and moderation."



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— Bob Adelman



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