

National Member Agencies

American Jewish Committee
American Jewish Congress
Anti-Defamation League
B'nai B'rith
Hadassah
Jewish Labor Committee
Jewish Reconstructionist Federation
Jewish War Veterans
National Council
of Jewish Women
Union for Reform Judaism
Union of Orthodox Jewish
Congregations of America
United Synagogue
of Conservative Judaism
Women's American ORT
Women's League
for Conservative Judaism

May 25, 2010

Dear Senator:

On behalf of the organized Jewish community, we the undersigned organizations urge you to repeal the discriminatory law known as "Don't Ask Don't Tell" (DADT). We believe this policy is unjust and become an anomaly among western nations. Advanced militaries throughout the world, including many of our NATO allies and Israel, allow gay, lesbian and bisexual personnel to serve openly. It is time for the United States to repeal the "Don't Ask Don't Tell" and we encourage you and colleagues to act this year.

The 1993 "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy was proffered as a compromise that held the promise that would allow gays and lesbians to serve in the military if they did not reveal their sexual orientation. Established under the premise of discretion and privacy, the policy still barred lesbian, gay, and bisexual people from serving openly in the military. Any service member that revealed his or her homosexuality would be discharged. However, the policy also ostensibly precluded military officials from investigating soldiers suspected of being homosexual. Since the enactment of the DADT policy, more than 13,000 individuals have been discharged from the U.S. armed services due to their sexual orientation – a rate similar to before the DADT law.

Since the implementation of "Don't Ask, Don't Tell," public opinion on this issue has changed dramatically. In 1994, only 44% of the Americans agreed gay and lesbian service members should be allowed to serve openly. Today, 75% of Americans, a majority of both Democrats and Republicans, believe openly lesbian and gay citizens should be able to serve in the U.S. military.

We will continue to build and participate in coalitions that advocate for repeal of "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" and for policies and programs that will allow lesbian and gay Americans to openly serve openly in the military,



without discrimination. We encourage you and your colleagues to do your part, by repealing the underlying law this year.

If you have any questions, please contact Jared Feldman, JCPA Deputy Washington Director, at 202-212-6036 or by email at jfeldman@thejcpa.org.

Sincerely,

Jewish Council for Public Affairs
American Jewish Committee
American Jewish Congress
Anti-Defamation League
B'nai B'rith International
Jewish Labor Committee
Jewish Reconstructionist Federation
National Council of Jewish Women
Union for Reform Judaism
United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism