

# The American Legion



*For God and country*

OFFICE OF THE  
NATIONAL COMMANDER

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May 19, 2010

The Honorable John A. Boehner  
Minority Leader of the House  
1011 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515-3508

Dear Representative Boehner:

The American Legion is concerned about reports that some in Congress might seek an amendment in the Fiscal Year (FY) 2011 defense authorization bill that would end the military's "don't ask, don't tell" (DADT) policy.

As the nation's largest wartime veterans organization, we feel strongly that the current policy has served the U.S. military well for 17 years and it would not be wise to make a major cultural change in the middle of two wars. Moreover, the Department of Defense has already directed a study on the policy and it would be premature to act before the commission conducting the study releases its findings.

Under current policy, men and women are already allowed to serve their country regardless of their sexual preference. Allowing homosexual servicemembers to announce their preference within the ranks could jeopardize the unit cohesion which is so essential to military success.

House Armed Services Committee Chairman Ike Skelton, who sat on the committee when DADT was implemented, opposes its repeal. Additionally, Marine Corps Commandant Gen. James Conway and Army Chief of Staff Gen. George Casey have also voiced concerns about the impact such a change would have on the current force structure.

The military is a unique environment, in which DADT has worked well without diminishing our nation's war-fighting capability. Indeed, the core purpose of our military is to fight and win our nation's wars. Enacting any law that does not enhance the military's ability to accomplish that mission would be detrimental to the security of our nation. We believe that the repeal of DADT would be such an action.

Sincerely,

Clarence E. Hill  
National Commander  
The American Legion