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Heinrich: Policy of "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" Is Discriminatory

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WASHINGTON, D.C. — U.S. Representative Martin Heinrich (NM-1) voted in support of legislation to repeal the U.S. Department of Defense's "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" (DADT) policy today. The stand alone bill passed the House by a vote of 250 to 175.

"If someone is willing to take up arms and defend this nation in our military, they shouldn't face a policy of discrimination, period," said Rep. Heinrich. "Repealing "Don't Ask Don't Tell" continues a tradition that service to our country should be judged based on conduct and capability, not race, gender, or sexual orientation."

Rep. Heinrich is a cosponsor of H.R. 1283, the Military Readiness Enhancement Act of 2009, which would repeal the DADT policy. An amendment to the Defense Authorization Act that calls for a repeal of DADT passed the House on May 27, 2010 with the support of Rep. Heinrich.

By voting to repeal the discriminatory DADT policy, Rep Heinrich stood up for fairness and the belief in a better America and a stronger military.

Background:

Poll after poll show that the American people strongly support repeal of "Don't Ask, Don't Tell."The latest [Washington Post/ABC News poll](#), released today, finds that nearly eight in 10 Americans favor allowing gays and lesbians to serve openly in the military.

The Department of Defense [survey of service members](#) on repeal of "Don't Ask, Don't Tell,"released last month, also had striking results. Seventy percent of service members believe that serving beside an openly gay colleague would have positive, mixed or no effect on unit cohesion. And of the troops who believe that they have already worked with a gay service member, an overwhelming 92 percent believe that doing so was a very good, good, or neutral experience.

On November 30, 2010, Defense Secretary Robert Gates urged the repeal of the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy, "I am determined to see that if the law is repealed," he said, "the changes are implemented in such a way as to minimize any negative impact on the morale, cohesion and effectiveness of combat units that are deployed, or about to deploy to the front lines," Gates said at a [Pentagon news conference](#).