

McCain Describes Repeal of Don't Ask Don't Tell "Dangerous"

Opposition by Sixty Percent of Army, Marine Combat Troops Discounted

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President Obama and Democrats in control of Congress until January are determined to repeal the Don't Ask, Don't Tell policy governing homosexuals in the military during the "lame duck" session of Congress as part of the Defense Authorization Act.

A study conducted by the Department of Defense was released last week and the US Senate held hearings before the week ended, questioning the service chiefs, who are hard pressed to oppose a decision by the Commander in Chief they have sworn to obey.

The hearings were televised by CSPAN.

Democrat Senators were all promoting repeal of the rules and Republicans opposed. Senators McCain and Sessions were the most outspoken opponents. McCain said the study was flawed because it emphasized the total military population and not the combat troops who are the ones fighting our wars and who strongly objected to repeal of the rule. Sixty percent of Army and Marine Corps troops in combat units said they thought, "repealing the law would hurt their units' ability to fight on the battlefield." Only eleven percent of those surveyed said repealing the rules would be beneficial to the military.

McCain was critical of the fact that the study dealt with how to implement repeal of the law rather than whether the law should be changed. This is a major flaw in the study according to most critics. From the viewpoint of the service chiefs who testified before the committee, Obama, the Commander in Chief, has already made the decision. Their job is to provide the leadership to implement the decision that has already been made. Most Republicans do not agree with Obama's decision and would attempt to have Congress reverse the decision by Obama.

McCain advised the Democrats in charge of the hearing that if they wanted to get factual information, they would invite Non-Commissioned Officers who serve with combat units to the hearings to testify.

The survey revealed that 12.6 percent of the troops surveyed would leave the military earlier than they had planned. Sen. McCain said that translates into 264,600 leaving the service as the result of Obama's proposed policy change. Bob Maginnis, a senior fellow for national security with the Family Research Council said the real number "could exceed half a million if you add in the number who said they might leave, you get 23.7 percent and that would be 528,000 troops" leaving the military as a result of repeal of Don't Ask, Don't Tell.

McCain advised against making such a far-reaching personnel policy change in the midst of a war.

"At this time, we should be inherently cautious about making any changes that would affect our military, and what changes we do make should be the product of careful and deliberate considerations," McCain said.

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It will not go to have this bill go forward and neither will 41 of my colleagues – because our economy is in the tank, and the American people want that issue addressed, so to somehow believe that this is a compelling issue in the middle of fighting two wars is absurd," he concluded.

Secretary of Defense Robert Gates, who initiated the study on orders of the president, was cautious in his comments on the proposed repeal of Don't Ask, Don't Tell. after being briefed on the study. He described the decision by the President to repeal the existing law as potentially "disruptive," with a "potentially dangerous impact."

Retired combat veteran and now Congressman-elect Allen West, the first black congressman from Florida since the 1870's in an interview with News Max said it is "crazy" for military and congressional leaders to be wasting time talking about sexual behavior of soldiers when we have people being killed and a war to win.

"The mission of the United States military is not to accommodate behavior, and definitely not to accommodate sexual behavior. In the past week, we had the Taliban infiltrate a gentleman into the Afghan security forces who shot six American soldiers and killed them. What we should be talking about are rules of engagement and the strategic objectives that will lead to our victory and our success against the enemy," West told News Max. "Instead, we are worrying about who is sleeping with whom in the military. That's crazy!"

The survey suggests a drastic reduction in recruitment and retention if the rules are repealed and homosexuals practice their lifestyle openly in the military.

The Family Research Council, an influential conservative organization opposed to the repeal presented a national video webcast Thursday titled: Mission Compromised: How the Military is Being Used to Advance a Radical Agenda.

The forum was hosted by FRC President and Marine Corps Veteran Tony Perkins and featured Sen. Jim Inhofe, Oklahoma Republican, a member of the Senate Armed Services Committee and several retired military personnel. The military retirees have extensive military experience and contact with current active duty personnel and are no longer required to carry out the orders of the Commander in Chief and can speak factually and frankly.

Sixty-two percent of the troops surveyed said repealing the ban would create at least some negative effects.

Twenty-four percent of all service members said repealing the ban would cause them to either leave the military sooner than planned or think about leaving sooner than planned. Marines were much higher at 38 percent.

Twelve- percent of spouses would want their husbands or wife to leave the military if the ban is repealed.

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The study was conducted that if they divided up all their input numerically, "our sense is that the majority of views expressed were against repeal of the current policy."
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But that was not the question. President Obama has already decided that the law will be changed, and the Department of Defense survey wanted to know the impact of implementation prior to issuing the orders.

"Is President Obama willing to lose 12-30 percent of our fighting forces" to get repeal of Don't Ask, Don't Tell? asked Tony Perkins.