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**United States Senate**  
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES  
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6050

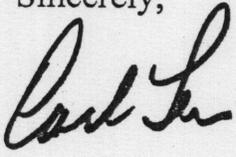
May 3, 2010

Honorable Robert M. Gates  
Secretary of Defense  
1000 Defense Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20301-1000

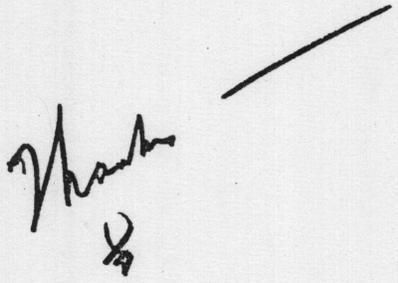
Dear Secretary Gates,

I am writing about your direction to the Department of Defense General Counsel and Commander, US Army Europe to stand up an intra-Department, inter-service working group to conduct a comprehensive review of the issues associated with a repeal of section 654 of title 10, United States Code, the statute establishing the policy concerning homosexuality in the Armed Forces.

Is the purpose of this comprehensive review to determine "whether" to repeal the statute or is it to assess the issues related to "how" to implement a repeal of the statute?

Sincerely,  


Carl Levin  
Chairman





SECRETARY OF DEFENSE  
1000 DEFENSE PENTAGON  
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-1000

MAY 6 2010

The Honorable Carl Levin  
Chairman  
Committee on Armed Services  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Thank you for your May 3 letter requesting clarification on the purpose behind the Department of Defense review of the so-called "Don't Ask Don't Tell" policy.

In testimony before the Congress on February 2, 2010, I stated: "The question before us is not whether the military prepares to make this change but how we...best prepare for it." This remains my position and that of the Department of Defense.

Accordingly, the review effort being led by Mr. Jeh Johnson and General Carter Ham is charged with assessing the impact of repealing 10 USC 654 and developing a plan to implement such a repeal in the most informed and effective manner possible. The outcome of this review is also intended to fully inform both Presidential and Congressional decision making to ensure a change in this law properly and fully addresses the various and complex considerations involved.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert M. Gates".



OSD 05501-10

