



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

