



THE COMMANDANT OF THE UNITED STATES COAST GUARD
MASTER CHIEF PETTY OFFICER OF THE COAST GUARD
Washington, DC 20593-0001



June 17, 2010

To the Men and Women of the United States Coast Guard:

In January of this year, the Commander-In-Chief asked Congress at the State of the Union Address to repeal 10 USC §654, the law which established the policy commonly known as "Don't Ask / Don't Tell." In response, the Secretary of Defense formally established a Comprehensive Review Working Group to explore the best way to do so, should Congress elect to repeal the law. The Working Group, well underway with Coast Guard participation, will produce its report for the Secretary of Defense in December 2010. The Coast Guard will conform to the policy produced and implemented by the Department of Defense.

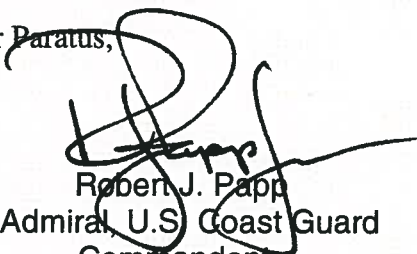
Congress has begun to develop legislation to move forward with the repeal of 10 USC §654. The versions under consideration have no immediate effect on the current policy. "Don't Ask / Don't Tell" remains in effect and, those members who are found to have engaged in homosexual conduct are subject to separation. Additionally, the legislation under consideration has no immediate effect on the Working Group's efforts, except to make their findings and final report more relevant. Both House and Senate versions under consideration would require, as a condition of repeal, that the President, Secretary of Defense, and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff certify that:


- a. they have considered the recommendations of the Working Group;
- b. policies and regulations have been prepared to implement the repeal;
- c. the repeal is consistent with standards of military readiness, effectiveness, unit cohesion and recruiting/retention of the Armed Forces.

As part of the development of its report, the Working Group will continue to engage the military around the country, a survey will be released in late June, and an Online Inbox has been established for military members and their families to provide anonymous input to the Working Group leadership. Your participation in these efforts is highly encouraged. The feedback from our Shipmates and their spouses will help shape this important policy.

I will provide more detail as the survey is finalized and becomes ready for release to the field. In the meantime, input to the Online Inbox may be submitted via a CAC-enabled computer at www.defense.gov/DADT.

Semper Paratus,


Robert J. Papp
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Commandant


Michael F. Leavitt
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MCPOCG