



THE SECRETARY OF THE AIR FORCE  
CHIEF OF STAFF, UNITED STATES AIR FORCE  
WASHINGTON DC



Thursday, March 18, 2010

**Assessing 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell' Legislation**

To the Airmen of the United States Air Force:

In January, the Commander-in-Chief directed the Department of Defense to conduct an assessment of the implications of repealing the Don't Ask, Don't Tell legislation. The findings are to be submitted to the Secretary of Defense on December 1, 2010. He is considering certain procedural changes, consistent with the current law, to be implemented while the assessment is ongoing. Until such time as the law is changed, we will continue to implement the existing law.

The Department of Defense has established a senior-level working group to thoroughly examine the effects of this potential change. We support the Department's comprehensive review of the complex issues that accompany a personnel policy shift of this magnitude, and have formed an Air Force team to assist this effort. In the coming months, the working group will survey service members and their families to discern their views-particularly, as they pertain to performance, unit cohesion, recruiting and retention, and other matters that impact our mission effectiveness-and to evaluate the range of regulations and policies that may be affected by this change. We encourage Airmen and family members to participate in these efforts.

During this review period, our primary goal is to understand all the issues and potential impacts associated with repeal of the law, and how to manage implementation in a way that minimizes disruptions to a force engaged in combat operations and other demanding military activities around the globe. We are confident that Airmen will respond to this review professionally and dispassionately, in a manner that is responsive to the direction of the Secretary of Defense. Be assured, no matter what the results, Air Force standards of conduct will continue to be applied consistently across the force.

As always, we are grateful for your work, and thankful for our supportive families who sacrifice daily, and who so selflessly give of themselves to our United States Air Force and Nation.

Handwritten signature of Michael B. Donley in black ink.

Michael B. Donley  
Secretary of the Air Force

Handwritten signature of Norton A. Schwartz in black ink.

Norton A. Schwartz  
General, USAF  
Chief of Staff

Handwritten signature of James A. Roy in black ink.

James A. Roy  
Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force