



## A Brief Guide to Repealing “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell”

“Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” is a federal statute that prohibits openly gay people from serving in the U.S. Armed Forces. It is the only federal statute that mandates firing someone because they are gay.

This statute will remain the law of the land until Congress repeals it or until a court rules that it is unconstitutional. SLDN is pursuing both avenues toward repeal of “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell.”

Since the Supreme Court upheld the constitutionality of the Solomon Amendment in *FAIR v. Rumsfeld*, many law students and faculty members have been asking SLDN what they can do to further the cause of repealing “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell.”

This brief *Guide* is designed to provide some examples of action you can take to repeal “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell.”

### Ten things you can do to repeal help SLDN repeal “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell”

- 1. Write your U.S. Representative.** In March of 2005, Rep. Marty Meehan (D-MA) introduced legislation to repeal “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” with 56 other Members of Congress. The [Military Readiness Enhancement Act](#) (HR 1059) replaces “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” with a federal statute prohibiting discrimination based on sexual orientation in the Armed Forces. You can learn more about the Military Readiness Enhancement Act [here](#), and see a list of current co-sponsors of the bill [here](#). Write your Representative urging him/her to support the Military Readiness Enhancement Act by clicking [here](#).
- 2. Write your U.S. Senator.** There is no legislation pending in the Senate to repeal “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell.” You can write your Senator urging him/her to support legislation to repeal “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” by clicking [here](#).
- 3. Sign the “Lift the Ban” Petition.** You can sign a petition calling for repeal of “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” which will be sent to your Representative, Senators, and the President of the United States by clicking [here](#).
- 4. Attend SLDN’s Lobby Day.** SLDN’s 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Lobby Day will be held from 14-16 May, 2006 in Washington, D.C. The Lobby Day training will teach you everything you need to know to advocate for repeal of “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” in the halls of Congress. If you can’t afford to travel to D.C., consider asking your law school or LGBT student organization to sponsor you. For more information and to register for Lobby Day, click [here](#).

5. **Lobby your elected officials at home.** If you can't travel to Washington for SLDN's Lobby Day, schedule an appointment with your U.S. Representative and your U.S. Senators in district. You can learn everything you need to know about "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" and lobbying your elected officials by clicking [here](#).
6. **Ask your school to lobby Congress to repeal "Don't Ask, Don't Tell."** Most universities employ or contract with government relations professionals to represent their interests in Congress. Ask your school to use its government relations assets to lobby for repeal of "Don't Ask, Don't Tell." You can find all the policy arguments for repealing "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" [here](#).
7. **Educate people you know about why "Don't Ask, Don't Tell should be repealed.** Talk to people you know – especially people who you know are voters – about why "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" is bad public policy. If you are a veteran, tell people your views about "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" – veterans' opinions matter a lot on this issue. Throw a "Lift the Ban" dinner party, and ask people to write letters to their representatives calling for repeal. Tell your family how important repealing "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" is to you. Bring a ["Lift the Ban" petition](#) to a group activity, and collect signatures. Get creative, have fun, and educate people!
8. **Vote.** Go to candidate forums for federal campaigns, and ask candidates where they stand on "Don't Ask, Don't Tell." Vote for candidates who pledge to work to repeal "Don't Ask, Don't Tell," and encourage your friends and family to do the same.
9. **Start a revolution – sponsor a resolution!** You can organize a group to pass a resolution calling for repeal of "Don't Ask, Don't Tell." Organizations as diverse as the California Legislature, the Chicago City Council, the Jewish War Veterans of the United States of American, the University of Rhode Island Faculty Senate, and the DeKalb County Democrats have passed resolutions calling for repeal of "Don't Ask, Don't Tell." Click [here](#) for examples of resolutions calling for repeal of "Don't Ask, Don't Tell."
10. **Support Servicemembers Legal Defense Network.** SLDN is the leading national non-profit organization assisting service members impacted by "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" and working for repeal. Learn more [about SLDN](#). Join our online [Action Center](#). [Support SLDN](#). Learn about [volunteer opportunities, internships, and employment](#) with SLDN.

*Find additional information online at [www.sldn.org/action](http://www.sldn.org/action),  
or email [sea@sldn.org](mailto:sea@sldn.org)*