



DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE

THE DEPARTMENT OF LAW
USAF ACADEMY, COLORADO

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Mr. Eric J. Schmertz
Ms. Natalie Datlof
Hofstra University
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Dear Mr. Schmertz and Ms. Datlof

Re: Abstract Proposal for 11th Presidential Conference, William Jefferson Clinton – The Military's Policy On Homosexual Conduct – “Don't Ask, Don't Tell” 10 Years Later

We propose a critical analysis of the Department of Defense (DoD) policy on homosexual conduct in the military, commonly referred to by civilians as the “Don't Ask, Don't Tell” policy. More specifically, the paper will take a look at the first ten years of this policy and make a determination as to how well it has attained its goals. In order to adequately address the DoD policy, our analysis will break the policy down into four component parts, commonly understood as: “Don't Ask,” “Don't Tell,” “Don't Pursue,” and “Don't Harass.”

The analysis will begin with a brief historical look at the policy towards homosexuals and homosexuality in the military. This will include an observation of the relevant events leading up to and encompassing the adoption of the current policy in the early nineties, President Clinton's role in the development of the policy, and the goals envisioned for the policy. The heart of the discussion will individually focus on the four component parts of the current policy, with an analysis of the details and evolution of each. Each component will be analyzed as to its relative success or usefulness. The paper will conclude with a brief look toward the future of the policy, including the potential impact of judicial action on the military's policy. We are optimistic that we will be able to appropriately cover the aforementioned subject matter within the prescribed space limitations.

We would like to add that our paper will be solely the work of the authors and should not be attributed in any way to the DoD or the USAF Academy. Moreover, prior to its release, the paper will need to be cleared for presentation by USAF authorities. Thank you for your consideration.

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