

4 May 2010

MEMORANDUM TO: DOD Comprehensive Review Working GROUP, 1600
DEFENSE PENTAGON, WASHINGTON, DC 20301, ATTN: CH (COL) Gary Linsky

SUBJECT: Proposed Repeal of the “Don’t Ask Don’t Tell” Law

The following contains some of the issues concerning the proposed repeal of the Don’t Ask Don’t Tell law that will impact the chaplains we endorse.

1. Preaching/teaching sound doctrine regarding sinful conduct: We believe that homosexual behavior is inconsistent with a Christian lifestyle. Our chaplains must be able to address sin as they see it, knowing that sinful behavior is harmful to individuals and to society at large. Chaplains must be able to speak against sin from the pulpit, as well as within a counseling session. Chaplains must also remain free to use the scripturally accurate depiction of the sinful nature of homosexual relations when necessary. IMPACT: Will chaplains be free to preach and counsel their convictions?
2. Gay marriages: Chaplains must remain free to refuse to perform any services violating their faith, such as weddings, counseling, or baby dedications for homosexual couples who adopt children or bring them from other relationships. IMPACT: Will chaplains be free to refuse to perform any services to professing homosexuals?
3. Counseling of soldiers who are affected by the conduct of homosexual personnel: Chaplains must feel free to validate a soldier's faith-based view of homosexuality as sin within the counseling environment. Chaplains must also be free to advise commanders in addressing the needs of soldiers who feel such conduct has violated their rights. IMPACT: Will chaplains be free to advise soldiers that they can maintain their convictions concerning homosexual behavior? Will chaplains be free to advise commanders of how soldiers have been adversely impacted by the homosexual behavior of peers and/or supervisors?
4. Strong Bonds: Strong Bonds marriage retreats are part of the commander’s program for assisting married soldiers after deployments. Commanders will be required by law to protect the rights of homosexuals in his/her command to have equal access to the programs and services that a chaplain provides leaving a chaplain's ministry vulnerable to Equal Opportunity violations. IMPACT: Will chaplains be required to include co-habiting homosexual couples in Strong Bond

events? If chaplains refuse to include homosexual couples, will they be guilty of Equal Opportunity violations?

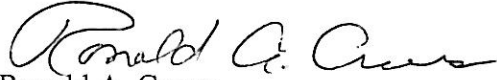
5. Chaplains are often given chapel duties that require working with persons of different faith groups. One of the strengths of the Chaplain Corps has been the collegiality and respect for chaplains from other faiths. That said, chaplains often find themselves not able to share pulpit responsibilities with chaplains from faith groups they deem inconsistent with their belief system. IMPACT: Will chaplains be required to share pulpit duties with homosexual chaplains or lay-leaders?
6. Chaplain Assistants. It is my understanding that the services do not require any particular worldview in order to be a chaplain assistant. IMPACT: Will chaplains be required to accept homosexual chaplain assistants if they deem that lifestyle to be harmful to the spiritual well-being of the soldier and may provide obstacles for ministering among soldiers who also hold convictions concerning that behavior?

Other Considerations:

1. Adultery: Since most states and federal law still defines marriage as the union of one man and one woman, will homosexuals living together open the door to the legitimization of adultery among all ranks in the military?
2. Housing: Once homosexuals can serve openly, will they be eligible to compete for on-post housing. Will military families have to share a wall in a duplex with homosexual couples and have their children exposed to a lifestyle they deem immoral?
3. Recruiting: Will this policy impact recruiting among those who deem homosexual behavior as harmful? Will parents encourage their sons and daughters to be placed under the care and supervision of an open, practicing homosexual?
4. Medical Coverage. The military medical community is already under pressure to provide medical care to current military members and their dependents. Will military medical resources be required to perform sex change operations for those persons who have confusion concerning their sexual identity?
5. If homosexual Soldiers can share rooms together in a barracks, will the same accommodation be afforded to heterosexual men and women?
6. If the Department of Defense maintains that same-sex relationships have the same value, dignity and honor as heterosexual relationships will DoD seek to restrict or limit the recruitment of clergy from denominations which embrace the traditional teachings of Judaism and Christianity on this subject?
7. Will tolerance and promotion of same-sex relationships become a discriminator on Officer Efficiency Reports and NCOERs?

Thank you for the opportunity to address these concerns. Grace Churches International will not endorse chaplains who hold hatred toward any person no matter their lifestyle. We believe in the commandment to love all people and to serve others. However, we are most concerned about the impact on our chaplains of the repeal of the Don't Ask, Don't Tell law. May God grant His wisdom as you make your report to Congress.

Respectfully submitted,



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cc:

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