

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 44

WHEREAS, lesbian, gay, and bisexual Americans have served honorably in the Armed Forces throughout United States history and continue to serve with distinction on active duty, including in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan; and

WHEREAS, the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy currently does not allow openly lesbian, gay, or bisexual Americans to serve in the military only because of their sexual orientation; and

WHEREAS, more than 13,500 service members have been discharged under the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy since the policy was enacted in 1993, including approximately 800 service members who performed heavily specialized jobs, such as Arabic translators, medical specialists, pilots, and intelligence personnel; and

WHEREAS, American taxpayers have spent more than \$360 million to carry out the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy by removing and replacing qualified and honorable service members because of their sexual orientation; and

WHEREAS, the United States military's readiness to protect and defend our nation is severely compromised by spending taxpayer money to discharge honorable service members who are satisfactorily carrying out all required tasks, many of which are highly specialized, making it difficult to find qualified replacement personnel; and

WHEREAS, America's allies in the war on terror, including the United Kingdom, Australia, Canada, and Israel, allow lesbian and gay service members to serve openly; and

WHEREAS, every Department of Defense authorized study has shown that there is no correlation between sexual orientation and unit cohesion in the Armed Forces; and

WHEREAS, there are more than 20,000 military and civilian personnel stationed in Missouri, and an estimated 9,000 lesbian, gay, or bisexual veterans currently residing in Missouri:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the members of the Missouri Senate, Ninety-fifth General Assembly, Second Regular Session, the House of Representatives concurring therein, hereby support the Military Readiness Enhancement Act that would replace the current "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy with a policy of nondiscrimination based on sexual orientation, and respectfully urge the Congress to pass and the President to sign the Military Readiness Enhancement Act so that lesbian, gay, and bisexual Americans are able to serve their country as any other American would be allowed to serve; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Secretary of the Senate be instructed to prepare properly inscribed copies of this resolution for each member of Missouri's congressional delegation.

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