

[More Civil Rights Information](#)

This week, our nation finally closed the door on a fundamental unfairness for gays and lesbians serving bravely in our country's military. The repeal of 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell' reaffirms our core American principle of fairness and liberty, and the basic ideal that we should all be judged on our character and ability and not on our religion, color of our skin or sexual orientation.

Celebrating the repeal of Don't Ask, Don't Tell also has special meaning on the Central Coast. In the 1940's, Fort Ord was the first military base to fully desegregate and lead the way in implementing fair treatment of all of our brave men and women in uniform. Now, 60 years later, that same tenet of equality that resulted in desegregation at Fort Ord is recognized in the repeal of Don't Ask Don't Tell.

As one who spends the work week in DC more often than not, let me assure you that changing government is not easy. However, I am proud of this historic milestone and winning the long fight to repeal Don't Ask, Don't Tell. Open Service in the U.S. Armed Forces means gay servicemen and women will no longer have to hide their sexual orientation for fear of punishment and disgrace. They can serve with pride for their country, and of who they are.

Too many gay military men and women have been dismissed for their sexual orientation. Unfortunately, many of those military personnel who were, sometimes, dishonorably discharged were critically needed linguists who had attended the Defense Language Institute, right here on the Central Coast. The DADT policy that did a disservice to these linguistics also did a disservice to the nation, by denying us their expertise at a time of war.

Even though this is a huge step forward for the advancement of civil rights for all GLBT people, there is more work to be done for a more just, fair and open society. As we take this step together, I recommit myself to fighting for the fundamental rights of freedom and liberty awarded to all of us.

We're not across the finish line yet, but by ending DADT, we're that much closer to building a more perfect union for all of us.