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November 17, 2010

The Honorable Harry Reid
Majority Leader
United States Senate
221 U.S. Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Majority Leader Reid:

As you consider legislation to advance during this work period, I write to urge you to bring up the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for debate in the Senate. The NDAA has been passed by the Senate every year for the past 48 years. This legislation should be debated and passed in the Senate this year, as well. As you know, the NDAA authorizes essential pay and benefits, weapons and equipment procurement, and military construction projects that are critical for the success of our military. In September, I voted to invoke cloture on the motion to proceed to the bill. Though this initial vote was unsuccessful, I believe we have a responsibility to our men and women in the military to continue to debate the NDAA before adjournment.

The Senate Armed Services Committee included a repeal of Don't Ask, Don't Tell (DADT) in the version it passed out of committee this year. The NDAA has traditionally concerned itself with military personnel policy, including the implementation of DADT in 1993, and remains the appropriate place for debate on the repeal of DADT. I encourage you not to separate debate on the repeal of DADT from the Senate's consideration of the NDAA in this work period.

I have consistently opposed DADT and worked for its repeal in the Senate. As a member of the House in 1993, I voted against the passage of DADT. This harmful law forces servicemembers to choose between the military and the person they love. Not one more servicemember should be forced to make that painful choice. Since 1993, over 13,000 patriotic servicemembers have been unjustly discharged from the military under DADT. A 2010 report from The Williams Institute at the University of California at Los Angeles School of Law estimates that the military has spent \$555 million to recruit and train new servicemembers to replace those discharged under DADT. This law has resulted in a waste of military talent and resources. It is time for the Senate to repeal it.

As a member of the Senate, it is my highest honor to represent the men and women of our nation's Armed Forces. By considering the NDAA, the Senate will have the opportunity to pass critical legislation that supports our military. It is imperative that the Senate take the time to consider the NDAA, including the repeal of Don't Ask, Don't Tell, as it was passed by the Senate Armed Services Committee, before adjournment.

Thank you for your leadership on this important issue.

Sincerely,



Ron Wyden

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