



## **SWANalert**

### **SWAN Applauds Repeal of the Discriminatory Don't Ask, Don't Tell Policy**

*Notes historic step forward in equality for servicemembers,  
but cautions the military has a long way to go*

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NEW YORK, NY – The Service Women's Action Network (SWAN) applauds Saturday's historic Senate vote to repeal the discriminatory Don't Ask, Don't Tell (DADT) policy which disproportionately affected women and people of color. The Service Women's Action Network extends thanks to the many different groups, particularly the military and veterans repeal organizations, who have worked tirelessly for years to put an end to DADT.

"This is a historic day for equality," said Anuradha Bhagwati, former Marine Corps Captain and Executive Director of SWAN. "But the military has a long way to go before equality exists. Gay-bashing and lesbian-baiting have historically been used to intimidate LGBT servicemembers into silence. With the repeal of DADT, gays and lesbians will at least be able to report sexual harassment and sexual assault without being discharged, but they still remain an unprotected class under Equal Opportunity policy. They remain at great risk of retribution and discrimination."

"We must learn from history. The armed forces have done a poor job thus far in protecting servicewomen from gender-based

violence and discrimination. The influx of openly serving LGBT servicemembers will require the military to do two things: Take a hard look the existing Equal Opportunity policy to ensure it provides adequate protections for gays and lesbians, and hold commanders accountable for enforcing it.”

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*SWAN's vision is to transform military culture by securing equal opportunity and the freedom to serve in uniform without threat of harassment, discrimination, intimidation or assault. SWAN also seeks to reform veterans' services on a national scale to guarantee equal access to quality health care, benefits and resources for women veterans and their families. You can follow the Service Women's Action Network on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/servicewomen>, or on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/servicewomen>.*



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