

**The White House**

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

December 22, 2010

## Background on the President's Don't Ask Don't Tell Repeal Bill Signing Today

### BACKGROUND ON THE PRESIDENT'S DON'T ASK DON'T TELL REPEAL BILL SIGNING TODAY US DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

In the morning, the President and the Vice President will deliver remarks and the President will sign into law the Don't Ask Don't Tell Repeal Act of 2010 in a ceremony at the Department of the Interior. The audience will be made up of approximately 500 attendees, including Administration officials, Members of Congress and key advocates and stakeholders.

#### STAGE PARTICIPANTS

- Admiral Mike Mullen, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff
- Deputy Secretary of Defense William Lynn
- Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-CA)
- Senator Harry Reid (D-NV), Majority Leader
- Representative Steny Hoyer (D-MD), Majority Leader
- Senator Joe Lieberman (I-CT)
- Senator Susan Collins (R-ME)
- Representative Patrick Murphy (D-PA)
- Representative Susan Davis (D-CA)
- Eric Alva, Former Staff Sgt, US Marine Corps
- Zoe Dunning, Former Commander, US Navy

Marine Staff Sgt. Eric Alva was the first American wounded in the war in Iraq. On March 21, 2003, he was traveling in Iraq in a convoy to Basra with his battalion when he stepped on a landmine, breaking his right arm and damaging his leg so badly that it needed to be amputated. Alva was awarded a Purple Heart and received a medical discharge from the military. Alva has been working with the Human Rights Campaign to speak out against the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy banning lesbian, gay and bisexual Americans from serving in the armed forces.

Commander Zoe Dunning has been a tireless advocate for fighting the military's policies prohibiting open gay service. Dunning is a graduate of the United States Naval Academy. In January 1993, while a Lieutenant in the U.S. Navy Reserves, Dunning publicly came out as a lesbian at a political rally outside the gates of California's Moffett Field. Dunning won her subsequent two-and-a-half year legal battle to remain in the Navy Reserves. The Navy promoted her twice and awarded her the Navy & Marine Corps Achievement Medal and the Navy & Marine Corps Commendation Medal since her coming out. She retired in June 2007 and holds the distinction of serving her country as an openly gay member of the U.S. military for over 13 years.

#### PRE-PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

Pledge of Allegiance: COL Margarethe Cammermeyer, US Army (Ret.)  
Margarethe (Grethe) joined the US Army and after graduating from college, served seven years on active duty and married a fellow military officer. Awarded the Bronze Star for service in Vietnam, she was forced to leave the military after becoming pregnant with her first child. When military regulations changed in 1972 and women were allowed to serve in the military with dependents, Margarethe returned to the Army Reserves. She later transferred to the National Guard, ultimately serving 31 years in the military prior to retirement as Washington State Chief Nurse. In 1989 Grethe disclosed, in a security clearance investigation, that she was a lesbian which resulted in her discharge in 1992. She challenged her discharge. In 1994 she was reinstated in the military as though never discharged. In June 2010 she was selected as a member of the Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services, (DACOWITS).

Invocation: Rabbi Arnold E. Resnicoff

Rabbi Arnold E. Resnicoff is a consultant on interfaith values and interreligious affairs; a former line officer who served in Vietnam's Mekong Delta, followed by assignments with Naval Intelligence before attending rabbinical

Search WhiteHouse.gov



#### BLOG POSTS ON THIS ISSUE

May 16, 2012 4:47 PM EDT  
[Jon Bon Jovi Helps Young Americans Find Summer Jobs](#)  
 Employers have listed more than 300,000 jobs, mentorships, and other employment opportunities through Summer Jobs+

May 16, 2012 3:00 PM EDT  
[By the Numbers: 2 Million](#)  
 Nearly 2 million companies that make new hires or increase wages would receive a tax credit under the small business hiring income tax credit President Obama is calling on Congress to pass.

May 16, 2012 1:29 PM EDT  
[President Obama Visits Taylor Gourmet](#)  
 President Obama stops by a Taylor Gourmet restaurant in Washington, DC to talk about how his To-Do List for Congress would help small business owners.

#### VIEW ALL RELATED BLOG POSTS

<a href="#">Facebook</a>	<a href="#">YouTube</a>
<a href="#">Twitter</a>	<a href="#">Vimeo</a>
<a href="#">Flickr</a>	<a href="#">iTunes</a>
<a href="#">Google+</a>	<a href="#">LinkedIn</a>

school; a retired Navy Chaplain who earned the Defense Superior Service Medal for his work with military and civilian leaders throughout Europe, Africa, and the Mid-East while serving as the Command Chaplain for the U.S. European Command; and a former National Director of Interreligious Affairs for the American Jewish Committee. From June 2005 to June 2006, he served as Special Assistant (for Values and Vision) to the Secretary and Chief-of-Staff of the U.S. Air Force, with the equivalent military rank of Brigadier General. Headquartered in the Pentagon, this appointment took him to Air Force bases in more than ten countries around the world, including those in Iraq, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates. On June 16, 2006, Secretary of the Air Force Michael Wynne presented him with the USAF Decoration for Exceptional Civilian Service--the highest award that the Air Force can present to a civilian. In addition to rabbinic ordination, he has three masters degrees, in International Relations, Strategic Studies and National Security Affairs, and Rabbis, and a doctorate from The Jewish Theological Seminary of America.

#### **MEMBERS OF CONGRESS EXPECTED TO ATTEND**

Senator Harry Reid, D-NV

Senator Dick Durbin, D-IL

Senator Joe Lieberman, I-CT

Senator Susan Collins, R-ME

Senator Barbara Boxer, D-CA

Senator Sherrod Brown, OH

Senator Ben Cardin, D-MD

Senator Bob Casey, D-PA

Senator Al Franken, D-MN

Senator Kirsten Gillibrand, D-NY

Senator Frank Lautenberg, D-NJ

Senator Patrick Leahy, D-VT

Senator Jeff Merkley, D-OR

Senator Patty Murray, D-WA

Senator Mark Udall, D-CO

Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-CA

Representative Steny Hoyer, D-MD

Representative Rob Andrews, D-NJ

Representative Tammy Baldwin, D-WI

Representative Jim Clyburn, D-SC

Representative John Conyers, D-MI

Representative Joe Courtney, D-CT

Representative Susan Davis, D-CA

Representative Barney Frank, D-MA

Representative Gabrielle Giffords, D-AZ

Representative Jane Harman, D-CA

Representative Martin Heinrich, D-NM

Representative Sheila Jackson-Lee, D-TX

Representative Hank Johnson, D-GA

Representative Frank Kratovil, D-MD

Representative Jim Langevin, D-RI

Representative Rick Larsen, D-WA

Representative John Lewis, D-GA

Representative Jim Moran, D-VA

Representative Patrick Murphy, D-PA

Representative Scott Murphy, D-NY

Representative Jerrold Nadler, D-NY

Representative Glenn Nye, D-VA

Representative Chellie Pingree, D-ME

Representative Todd Platts, R-PA

Representative Jared Polis, D-CO

Representative Mike Quigley, D-IL

Representative Carol Shea-Porter, D-NH

Representative Vic Snyder, D-AR

Representative Nikki Tsongas, D-MA

Representative Tim Walz, D-MN

WWW.WHITEHOUSE.GOV

En español | [Accessibility](#) | [Copyright Information](#) | [Privacy Policy](#) | [Contact](#)  
USA.gov | [Subscribe to RSS Feeds](#) | [Apply for a Job](#)

