

OCTOBER 14, 2010

## **Gates Says Gay Policy Is Job for Congress**

By **ADAM ENTOUS**

Defense Secretary Robert Gates said he would strongly prefer legislative action by Congress to repeal the policy that bans homosexuals from serving openly in the military, rather than seeing the ban repealed immediately by court order.

Mr. Gates said extensive training and regulatory changes were needed to ensure that the "don't ask, don't tell" policy is repealed in an orderly way to minimize the impact on U.S. forces.

A federal judge issued an injunction Tuesday to immediately stop enforcement of the 17-year-old policy, ordering the government to suspend and discontinue all pending discharge proceedings and investigations. The Department of Justice said it was reviewing the injunction and was likely to appeal.

"I feel very strongly that this is an action that needs to be taken by the Congress and that it is an action that requires careful preparation and a lot of training," Mr. Gates told reporters when asked his reaction to the decision by U.S. District Judge Virginia Phillips in Riverside, Calif.

Legislation to repeal the policy stalled in Congress last month but the White House and its Democratic allies plan to try again after the November election. President Barack Obama has made repeal a priority.

Mr. Gates has voiced support for repealing the policy, but wants any legislative changes to take effect after the Pentagon completes its own review later this year. "We have a lot of revision of regulations that has to be done, in addition to the training," Mr. Gates said.

He said the Pentagon review, which includes surveys of service members and their spouses, shouldn't be rushed.

"One of the results of the review will be what kind of other changes we need to make.... This is a very complex business. It has enormous consequences for our troops," Mr. Gates said.