

Lindsey Graham: 'Don't Ask Don't Tell Is Not Going Anywhere'



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WASHINGTON -- Senator Lindsey Graham (R-S.C.) predicted on Sunday that the military's Don't Ask, Don't Tell policy would not be repealed during the remaining weeks Congress is in session this calendar year.



The South Carolina Republican, a proponent of the law banning openly gay service in the armed forces, said definitively that there was no support for repeal on the Republican side of the aisle. He called for an additional study to determine whether the military itself favored overturning the 17-year-old legislation.

"This is a political promise made by Senator Obama when he was running for president," said Graham, during an appearance on Fox News Sunday. "There is no groundswell of opposition to Don't Ask, Don't Tell coming from our military. This is all politics. I don't believe there is anywhere near the votes to repeal Don't Ask, Don't Tell. On the Republican side, I think we will be united in the lame duck [session] and the study I would be looking for is asking military members: Should it be repealed, not how to implement it once you as a politician decide to repeal it. So I think in a lame duck setting Don't Ask, Don't Tell is not going anywhere."

Graham is, by virtue of the fact that he has served in the military (as a JAG lawyer), widely considered a leading GOP spokesman on defense matters. With respect to DADT, however, it's unclear to what extent his concerns reflect those of his colleagues. While Graham's top ally in the chamber -- Sen. John McCain (R-Ariz.) -- has also moved the goalposts for DADT repeal, others have been more sympathetic to revising or overturning the law. That list includes Sens. Lisa Murkowski (R-Alaska), Olympia Snowe (R-Maine) and even Jon Ensign (R-Nev.).