



Legislation Text

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Res. No. 1842

Resolution calling upon the United States Congress to pass and the President of the United States to sign the Restore Honor to Service Members Act, which would upgrade to honorable those discharge classifications received by gay and lesbian service members solely because of their sexual orientation.

By Council Members Van Bramer, the Speaker (Council Member Quinn), Brewer, Chin, Comrie, Dickens, Dromm, Ferreras, James, Koppell, Lander, Lappin, Mark-Viverito, Mendez, Palma, Richards, Rose and Jackson

Whereas, Beginning during World War II, the United States Armed Forces excluded gay and lesbian individuals from military service and provided for the discharge of homosexual service members; and

Whereas, A service member's discharge from the military is classified according to the characterization of their service; and

Whereas, Many benefits and services provided to veterans are only offered to those who received honorable or general discharges; and

Whereas, Between 1993 and 2011, a legislative compromise subsequently known as the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy barred inquiries into a service member's sexual orientation without credible evidence of homosexual behavior while prohibiting openly gay, lesbian, and bisexual individuals from military service; and

Whereas, Under the Don't Ask, Don't Tell policy, service members discharged due to their sexual orientation generally received honorable discharges, however, some of those accused of committing a "homosexual act" such as holding hands with a member of the same sex received less than honorable discharges; and

Whereas, Many individuals discharged from the military because of their sexual orientation prior to the implementation of Don't Ask, Don't Tell received dishonorable or otherwise punitive discharges; and

Whereas, Following the repeal of Don't Ask, Don't Tell policy in September 2011, the United States

Armed Forces recognizes the service and sacrifices of all service members, regardless of sexual orientation, and allows gay and lesbian individuals to serve openly in the United States military; and

Whereas, In June 2013, Congressmen Mark Pocan and Charles Rangel announced legislation, the Restore Honor to Service Members Act, that would provide for the upgrade of discharges that were otherwise honorable, but were not classified as such due to the service member's sexual orientation; and

Whereas, The Restore Honor to Service Members Act would also remove any reference to a service member's sexual orientation from their military record; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the New York City Council calls upon the United States Congress to pass and the President of the United States to sign the Restore Honor to Service Members Act, which would upgrade to honorable those discharge classifications received by gay and lesbian service members solely because of their sexual orientation.

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