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April 26, 2010

The Honorable Robert M. Gates
Secretary of Defense
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. Secretary:

On behalf of the American Bar Association, I write to express our strong support for repeal of 10 U.S.C. §654, the statute commonly known as “Don’t Ask Don’t Tell.” Attached to this letter, you will find a letter I have today sent to the House and Senate Armed Services Committees and House and Senate Leadership.

As indicated in that letter, our membership includes current and former judge advocates and judges, and we have enjoyed long-standing relationships with the Department of Defense and military service branches. While we are extremely proud of the military leaders in our membership, we wish to make it clear that we have not solicited the advice or support of active duty servicemembers out of respect for your position that it would be inappropriate for active duty officers to comment on the policy.

We appreciate the careful consideration with which you are exploring the manner of implementation of anticipated repeal through the study due December 1, 2010. We recognize that many collateral matters will have to be sorted out upon the implementation of repeal, and the ABA stands ready to assist in the development of an intelligent plan for dealing with those matters.

Should you have any questions about our position or if the ABA can be of assistance, please contact Thomas Susman, Director of the ABA Governmental Affairs Office, at 202-662-1765 or susmant@staff.abanet.org.

Sincerely,



Carolyn B. Lamm

/Enclosures