

Sat Feb 5  
Bear Mardi Gras Party

Sat Feb 12  
TLC Black Heart Ball  
co-hosted with Capital Leathermen

Sat Feb 19  
Miller Lite Flash Light Party  
hosted by Highland Leather Club

Sat Feb 26  
Gay Rugby Bar Night  
Meet the Charlotte Royals - charlotteroyals.org

Sun Feb 6  
Annual Super Bowl Party

Oscar Party  
Sun Feb 27  
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wednesdays - country music 8-till  
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## Congress passes resolution supporting military's discrimination in recruiting

*Liberal congress leaders and LGBT advocates express outrage*

by Steve Ralls

WASHINGTON, D.C. — By a vote of 327 to 84, the House of Representatives passed a "Sense of Congress" resolution Feb. 2, opposing a Third Circuit court decision striking down the discriminatory *Solomon Amendment*, which punishes universities with gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender-inclusive, nondiscrimination policies for holding military recruiters to the same standards as other recruiters.

In November the Third Circuit ruled that *Solomon*, a law which forced universities to violate nondiscrimination policies that include sexual orientation by allowing military recruiters on-campus access to students, was unconstitutional. The court found that the law infringed on the free speech rights of law schools that had sought to enforce their nondiscrimination policies.

Those policies, the schools argued, compelled them to prevent employers who discriminate on the basis of sexual orientation from recruiting on campus. The lawsuit was brought by a coalition of 25 law schools and universities, and supported by Servicemembers Legal Defense Network (SLDN).

The resolution states that "it is the sense of Congress that the executive branch should continue to pursue" an appeal of the Third Circuit decision.

"Today's so-called 'Sense of Congress' makes no sense at all," said Sharra E. Greer, director of Law & Policy for SLDN. "The military certainly has the right — and the responsibility — to recruit the best and brightest, but the best and brightest should include lesbian, gay and bisexual students, too. That's exactly why it should abandon 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell.' If Congress were truly concerned about national security, it would focus its attention on the talents of the nearly 10,000 lesbian, gay and bisexual service members who have been fired because of their sexual orientation. It is the military's ban, and not the Third Circuit's decision, which is contrary to our national security interests."

Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee (D-TX), in opposing the resolution, said that "We must support our troops in accordance with the U.S. Constitution and with respect for civil rights and fundamental freedoms that are the rubric of this nation."

Congresswoman Tammy Baldwin (D-WI) who also opposed the resolution, stated that "We should be looking at ways to strengthen our military and expand our resources for winning the fight against Al Qaeda and other terrorist organizations." Baldwin went on to ask, "When will we have the debate about the harm caused by excluding many qualified, skilled Americans from serving in our military simply because

they are gay or lesbian?"

"Congress should not be promoting a policy that gives the military the go-ahead to discriminate," said HRC Political Director Winnie Stachelberg. "This amendment gives special permission to the military to discriminate when private sector recruiters can not. The real employment issue in the military has to do with retention not recruiting. One solution is to allow gay, lesbian and



**Congresswoman Tammy Baldwin (D-WI): 'When will we have the debate about the harm caused by excluding many qualified, skilled Americans from serving in our military simply because they are gay or lesbian?'**

bisexual service members to serve openly in the armed forces.

"This resolution seems directed at the universities in court who are merely seeking their right to enforce nondiscrimination policies," added Stachelberg. "All available evidence suggests that there are no shortages in recruiting on campus. However, there are shortages of trained and experienced service members. We should reform the military's current discriminatory employment policy known as 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell' so that trained service members aren't needlessly discharged."

According to a Dec. 16, 2004, article in the *Wall Street Journal*, more than 52,000 are now enrolled in Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) programs, up from 48,000 in 2000. This past year, 70 percent of the Army's newly-commissioned officers came from ROTC. In fact, the Defense Department has reported meeting all its recruiting and retention goals in the past several years.

However, Department spokespeople have recently underscored the shortage of trained linguists and other specialties. *The New Republic* reported in January 2005 that between 1998 and 2004, the military discharged 20 Arabic and six Farsi language speakers under the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy.