

Military Culture Coalition

Update: MCC 2012 Presidential Candidate Survey

Romney Endorses Gays-In-Military (LGBT) Law; Gingrich Opposed

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For Immediate Release

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In [an interview with the *Des Moines Register*](#) editorial board last Friday, former Massachusetts Governor **Mitt Romney** said that he does not plan to change a law mandating acceptance of gays serving openly in the military. Romney indicated that he was "*not comfortable with making the change during a time of conflict,*" but "*complicating features*" of the new law "*no longer present that problem*" because the two wars in the Middle East are winding down. (See video at 35")

Also last Friday, former House Speaker **Newt Gingrich** responded to the non-partisan **Military Culture Coalition 2012 Presidential Candidate Survey**, joining other conservative candidates in opposing repeal of the 1993 law. **Elaine Donnelly**, President of the **Center for Military Readiness** said, "*The responses of Speaker Gingrich are a welcome addition to this ongoing educational project.*"

Donnelly questioned Governor Romney's comments to the *Des Moines Register*, noting that "*The military does not work that way. Flawed policies that impose heavy 'complicating features' on the backs of military men and women cannot and should not be switched on and off, depending on the direction of political winds or promises made to LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender) activists of either political party.*"

She added, "*Sound policies that reinforce morale and readiness should be maintained at all times. A long list of what Governor Romney calls 'complicating features' were caused when the 2010 lame-duck Congress voted for Obama's LGBT Law and related policies. Current problems and those yet to come are no more acceptable now than in the midst of a shooting war.*"

The Military Culture Coalition (MCC) Survey was submitted on November 14 to all the candidates who are competing for the Republican presidential nomination. Congressman **Ron Paul**, who voted twice for gays in the military in 2010, and former Utah Governor **Jon Huntsman**, did not respond to the MCC Survey. Both are still welcome to explain their positions.

The MCC Survey was signed by fifteen conservative leaders, whose names and signatures were displayed on the December 6 [MCC News Release](#) announcing survey results. That news release also included information on the candidates' past statements on issues of concern.

Texas Governor **Rick Perry**, Congresswoman **Michele Bachmann**, former Senator **Rick Santorum**, and now Speaker Gingrich have given solid answers to six questions about social issues in the military, which MCC leaders regard as matters of national defense. This is a brief summary of the four candidates' responses:

1. Position on the "**Don't Ask, Don't Tell**" **Repeal Act**, legislation to repeal the 1993 law regarding homosexuals in the military , which was rushed through the 2010 lame-duck Congress (**All would have voted "No" on repeal**; Rep. Bachmann did vote "No," but Rep. **Ron Paul** voted "Yes.")
2. Position on full and specific reviews of the consequences of that repeal, and administrative or legislative steps to restore sound policies regarding homosexual conduct that would *improve* the All-Volunteer Force (**All support**)
3. Continued enforcement of the Defense of Marriage Act in the military (**All support**)
4. Career penalties for military chaplains and personnel who express sincere concern or disagreement with the new LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual transgender) law and related policies (**All opposed**)
5. LGBT celebrations in the White House and on military bases (**All opposed**)
6. Repeal of policies that exempt military women from direct ground combat (infantry) units that attack the enemy, and civilian women from **Selective Service** (registration) obligations (**All opposed**)

The [Military Culture Coalition 2012 Presidential Candidate Survey](#) included brief statements introducing the six questions below:

1. Homosexuals in the Military

If you had been a member of the 111th Congress in 2010, how would you have voted on the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" Repeal Act?

- Santorum, Perry, and Gingrich answered "No." Bachmann did vote "No" in 2010.

2. LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual Transgender) Law in the Military

As Commander-in-Chief, will you order full and specific reviews of the consequences of LGBT Law and related policies in the military, and take administrative or legislative steps to restore sound policies regarding homosexual conduct that improve the All-Volunteer Force?

- Bachmann, Santorum, Perry, and Gingrich answered "Yes."

3. The Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) in the Military

Will your administration instruct the Department of Defense and Department of Justice to respect, enforce, and defend in court the Defense of Marriage Act in the military?

- Bachmann, Santorum, Perry, and Gingrich answered "Yes."

4. Religious Liberty and "Zero Tolerance" of Dissent

As Commander-in-Chief, would you order the Defense Department to impose career penalties on military chaplains and personnel who express sincere concern or disagreement with the LGBT law and related policies in the military?

- Bachmann, Santorum, Perry, and Gingrich answered "No."

5. LGBT Celebrations

Will your administration continue "LGBT Equality" observances, permit "gay pride" events on military bases, and expand the current policy to accommodate transgendered personnel?

- Bachmann, Santorum, Perry, and Gingrich answered "No."

6. Women In or Near Direct Ground Combat

As Commander-in-Chief, would you assign female soldiers and Marines to direct ground combat units that attack the enemy with deliberate offensive action; i.e., infantry, armor, and Special Operations Forces?

- Bachmann, Santorum, Perry, and Gingrich answered "No."

The survey also provided more detailed background information on each of the questions:

[Background: MCC Presidential Candidate Survey](#)

On behalf of the Military Culture Coalition, Elaine Donnelly expressed appreciation of the candidates who responded to the MCC Survey. *"These are national defense issues, even though they involve matters of faith and the culture of the military. We remain willing to assist all of the candidates in understanding the importance of the issues raised, which will be matters of concern for as long as we have a military."*

All organization names are for identification purposes only, and the survey was conducted for educational purposes, not to endorse candidates.

Elaine Donnelly, President, Center for Military Readiness

Al Cardenas, Chairman, American Conservative Union

Andrea Lafferty, President, Traditional Values Coalition

Tom Minnery, Executive Director, CitizenLink (Policy Arm of Focus on the Family)

Colin Hanna, President, Let Freedom Ring

Phyllis Schlafly, President, Eagle Forum
Gary Bauer, President, American Values
Tim Wildmon, President, American Family Association
Frank Gaffney, President, Center for Security Policy
Rev. Rick Scarborough, President, Vision America
Andy Blom, Executive Director, American Principles Project
Dr. James Dobson, Founder and President, Family Talk
Chris Carmouche, Founder & President, Grasstops USA
Mathew Staver, Founder and Chairman, Liberty Counsel
Kristian M. Mineau, President, Massachusetts Family Institute.

For more information on the Military Culture Coalition Presidential Candidate Survey, call Project Coordinator Elaine Donnelly, **734/464-9430**. The Center for Military Readiness has conducted a quadrennial non-partisan survey of presidential candidates in the past four presidential election cycles. More information is available at www.cmrlink.org.