



Written by [Raven Clabough](#) on September 22, 2010

## Controversial Defense Bill Fails to be Passed

Apparently loading the military defense policy bill with controversy did not work well for the Democrats as the bill failed to clear a procedural vote in the Senate today. Unable to muster up the necessary 60 votes, Senate Democrats could not resist objections from Republicans, resulting in a failed vote of 56 to 43.

The policy bill would likely have passed without a hitch had it not been for the inclusion of controversial provisions such as those introduced by Senator Harry Reid and Senator Roland Burris.



Several days ago, Reid introduced an amendment to the defense policy bill called the DREAM Act, which provided a pathway to citizenship for illegal aliens who attend college or enlist in the military. Reid also included a provision that would repeal the current military policy of “Don’t ask, don’t tell,” to the chagrin of frustrated conservatives.

Burris further complicated the passage of the bill by inserting an amendment that would have ended the longstanding ban on elective military abortions at overseas hospitals, insisting that military personnel are entitled to the “highest quality care,” which, for Burris, “includes allowing women and their families the right to choose at facilities operated under the Department of Defense.”

Fox News describes the debate over the defense policy bill as “political football” because “cultural hot buttons” were unnecessarily added to the \$726 billion bill.

Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell criticized the Senators’ decisions to create “needless controversy” that ultimately halted the passage of an important bill.

Fox News reports that the failed vote “makes it all the less likely that Congress will take any substantive action on ‘Don’t ask, don’t tell’ or the broader defense package before adjourning for the November midterm elections.”

Democrats needed all hands on board, as well as a Republican turncoat, and they expected Republican Susan Collins to be it. Senator Susan Collins elected to vote against the bill to indicate her opposition to Reid, who limited debate on the bill and refused to allow Republicans the opportunity to offer amendments. Even the Log Cabin Republicans, a homosexual GOP organization, openly criticized Reid for his refusal to allow amendments to the bill. Democrats fell four votes short because two other Dems also voted against the bill, as well as Harry Reid, who did so for procedural reasons.

According to Fox News, the failed passage of the bill “marks the first time in 48 years that Congress will not have passed a defense authorization bill before heading out of town.”

The failed vote will not suspend military spending, however, as Congress has the option to pass a continuing resolution that will continue to maintain current spending well into the new fiscal year, which begins on October 1.



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The failure to repeal the military's "Don't ask, don't tell" policy appeases military officials who have urged Congress to suspend efforts to repeal the policy until an internal Pentagon review on the topic was completed. Still, Democrats remain frustrated that their efforts were unsuccessful.

Furthermore, Democrats have pledged to find an alternative route to pass the DREAM Act. Majority Whip Dick Durbin emphasized, "I want everyone within the sound of my voice to hear — we're going to vote on the DREAM Act."

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