

WASHINGTON – Tonight, Congressman Mike Quigley (D-IL) issued the following statement after President Barack Obama's State of the Union address:

"I applaud President Obama for making it crystal clear that the United States military cannot continue the discriminatory policy of 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell.' **To prohibit some of our bravest men and women from serving the country they love simply because of who they love is unacceptable.** It is not only morally repugnant, but it undermines our national security and makes us less safe at a critical juncture.

When I visited Iraq and met our soldiers there, I didn't see black or white, Democrats or Republicans, gay or straight. I saw Americans who were willing to serve their country.

I look forward to the day when our military both welcomes and celebrates the identities of all its soldiers, and I remain committed to working with the President and my colleagues to reconcile our policies with our fundamental ideals of equality."

As one of his first acts in Congress last spring, Quigley issued a statement calling for the repeal of the U.S. military's "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy. An emerging national advocate for the LGBT community, Quigley has cosponsored several bills that fight for equality and human rights. Most recently, he stood up in strong support for a bill to provide benefits to same-sex partners of federal employees by successfully introducing and passing an amendment to illustrate how extending fairness and equity to all employees will in fact help the government recruit and retain talented individuals.

Quigley is a member of the Congressional Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Equality Caucus and was recently inducted into the Chicago Gay and Lesbian Hall of Fame as a Friend of the Community.