



DEAR MARY,

In 1996, a "Call to Conscience" was published in this paper. It appeared on the eve of a congressional vote on the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA), legislation to discriminate against gays and lesbians who want their marriages recognized by the government. Closeted gay and lesbian members of Congress and staff were asked to come to the defense of their community; far too few answered the call. We approached them with decency and fairness, and they ignored us.

Eight years later, we find ourselves facing another, far more dangerous and sweeping attack on committed gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered couples; an attack that would

not only ban same-gender marriage in the US Constitution, but could repeal every pro-gay law and corporate policy in the nation.

We approached you, Mary, with a personal plea to come to our aid, and you chose a \$100,000 a year job over your community.

But you are not alone, Mary. Far too many gays and lesbians in Washington, DC choose like you to be fence sitters and sell-outs -- anti-gay by day and queer by night. We can no longer afford your silence. You can no longer expect our own.

WE NOW ISSUE THIS FINAL CALL TO CONSCIENCE.

We call upon members of Congress who support the Federal Marriage Amendment (and similar anti-gay legislation), their staff, and members of the Bush administration -- both gay and straight, Republican and Democrat -- one last time:

If you are gay, end your silence. Stop aiding and abetting those who would make us second-class citizens. Defend your community in this dire hour.

If you are straight, end your hypocrisy. Stop publicly challenging our "family values" when the radical right would no more approve of your own private lives.

Together, we can end the legislative gay-bashing that now passes for legitimate election-year politics. Let us join together and show anti-gay politicians and their staff how it feels to have one's private life publicly exposed and mocked in the name of "family values."

To all the Mary Cheney's in Washington, DC and beyond, both in the closet and out; to all those who claim to support our community but devote their careers to politicians who attack and demonize us; and to all those who are self-loathing or self-serving, we say this:

**FOR YEARS OUR SILENCE HAS PROTECTED YOU.
TODAY THAT PROTECTION ENDS.**

Sincerely,
John Aravosis and Robin Tyler,
National Co-Chairs of DearMary.com and DontAmend.com

