A Military HIV Milestone

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Each year, Congress must pass the National Defense Authorization Act. But this year's approved law includes a historic provision: It requires the Secretary of Defense to prepare a report on its policies regarding people in the military who are living with HIV or hepatitis B and to assess whether the policies "reflect an evidence-based, medically accurate understanding" of the two conditions. This includes policies for deployment, discharges and disciplinary actions. Another provision of the law repeals the offense of consensual sodomy.

"For the first time, the U.S. Congress has taken action to address HIV criminalization," blogs Sean Strub, POZ founder and current executive director of advocacy group the Sero Project. Such measures in the military could influence laws across the country regarding HIV transmission and consensual sex. And as the saying goes: The best defense is a good offense.

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