

## **B'KLYN MAN SEES POLS NIX DREAM OF SERVING**

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### **Body**

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THE SENATE'S decision yesterday to keep the military's "don't ask, don't tell" rule also thwarted a Brooklyn man's dream of joining the Marines.

Part of the legislation that was voted down was a measure that would have let children of illegal immigrants like CUNY Law School student Cesar Vargas join the armed forces.

"I would say to my friends and colleagues on both sides of the aisle, where is the justice in this decision?" Sen. Dick Durbin (D-Ill.), who introduced the so-called "Dream Act," told his Senate colleagues.

In a speech on the Senate floor, Durbin cited Vargas, 26, as an "exceptionally gifted young man" who is being barred from serving his adopted country because he is an undocumented immigrant.

Last night, Vargas, who was on Capitol Hill yesterday to witness the vote, vowed to keep fighting until the legislation is passed.

"Most people say that we were destroyed, but now we've got to turn up the volume," Vargas said. "We're ready to go for the next battle."

Vargas and his parents illegally immigrated to the United States from Mexico when he was 5 years old.

"Actually, I consider myself a Brooklyn-born-and-raised American," Vargas said.

He graduated with honors from Brooklyn's James Madison High School, earned an undergraduate degree from St. Francis College in Brooklyn Heights and is in his third and final year at CUNY Law School.

Vargas said his dream is to become a military lawyer in the Marines or an intelligence officer.

"But the military does not accept individuals without legal status. So that is essentially the roadblock," Vargas said.

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### **Graphic**

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Brooklyn law student Cesar Vargas, speaking on Capitol Hill yesterday, vows to keep fighting until he can serve in military. Photo by AP

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