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Chaplain Alliance testifies about negative effects of administration policies on religious freedom in military

WASHINGTON — At the invitation of the U.S. House Armed Service Committee, Chaplain Alliance for Religious Liberty provided [written testimony](#) Tuesday about the impact of recent Department of Defense policies on religious liberty for service members, including chaplains.

Chaplain (Brig Gen) USAR (Ret) Douglas E. Lee, president of Chaplain Alliance, will be present at the committee's hearing on the subject Wednesday at (TIME) EST.

"No American, especially those who wear our nation's military uniforms, should be denied their God-given, constitutionally protected religious freedoms," said Chaplain (COL) Ron Crews, USAR, retired, executive director for Chaplain Alliance for Religious Liberty. "While there is no question chaplains will continue to serve all service members, there is increasing reason to be concerned that the government will not allow them the freedom to do that job as the Constitution requires. And that diminished liberty will, in turn, harm those whom chaplains exist to serve: service members."

"Our Nation has a history...of working hard to protect and accommodate military religious liberty, a tradition which has limited restrictions on service members' ability to live their faiths..." the testimony submitted to the committee explains. "But our government has been retreating from that history of accommodation, enacting new policies without considering the harm to religious liberty and occasionally even taking affirmatively hostile actions toward faith. The vast majority of these blows to religious expression have come in the context of matters of sexual ethics, specifically homosexuality."

"The Obama Administration has quietly but steadily created a type of sexual orientation non-discrimination requirement for the military," the testimony continues. "Further, the Administration has vocally adopted a pro-homosexuality position. Both broad developments have created conflicts with service members and chaplains who hold traditional religious views on marriage and sexuality: that sex is meant for marriage, and marriage means a union between a man and a woman.... The military is duty-bound to take steps to remedy the current unfavorable climate for religious liberty. We ask the House Armed Services Committee to continue to advocate for religious liberty protections for chaplains and those they serve."

The Chaplain Alliance for Religious Liberty is an organization of chaplain endorsers, the faith groups that provide chaplains for the U.S. military and other agencies needing chaplains. The endorsers in the Chaplain Alliance speak for more than 2,600 chaplains serving the Armed Forces.

Pursuing a nation where all chaplains and those they serve freely exercise their religious liberties without fear of reprisal.

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