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Chaplain endorsers meet with Air Force leaders, call for action by Secretary of Defense

WASHINGTON — The Chaplain Alliance for Religious Liberty, an organization of chaplain endorsers representing more than 2,000 current chaplains actively serving the armed forces, commended senior Air Force officials Thursday for a recent meeting to discuss Air Force policies on religious liberty. The Chaplain Alliance is now asking the Defense Department to take additional action based on the meeting.

“Those who are fighting and dying to defend our rights must not themselves be deprived of them,” said CH (COL) Ron Crews, USAR retired, executive director for the Chaplain Alliance. “We are very pleased the Air Force confirmed for us, as clearly stated in Air Force instruction 1.1, that service members shall be free to exercise their religious beliefs without fear. This is why Congress passed Section 533 protecting the conscience rights of all service members. The secretary of Defense now needs to issue regulations to implement Section 533 to guarantee that these freedoms remain protected under the Military Code.”

“Our country was founded on religious freedom,” Crews added, “and it’s why the Chaplain Alliance exists: to ensure that all service members across the globe can exercise with confidence the religious beliefs they put their lives on the line to defend.”

The Chaplain Alliance for Religious Liberty anticipates that this will be the first of many meetings to discuss these issues, not only with the Air Force, but with other military leaders.

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 2,000 chaplains serving the armed forces.

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