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Chaplains thank Senate for prohibiting coercion in leading marriage ceremonies

WASHINGTON - Chaplain endorsers, representing more than 2,000 military chaplains, are congratulating the U.S. Senate for their vote Tuesday to ensure military chaplains are not forced to perform so-called same-sex “marriage” ceremonies. The chaplain endorsers also reaffirmed their call for congressional hearings on the religious liberty threats brought about by the dismantling of the law against openly practiced homosexual behavior in the military.

“Chaplains should be able to continue to serve our military personnel without fear of reprisal for their Biblically held views concerning sexuality and the definition of marriage,” said Dr. Ron Crews, executive director of the Chaplain Alliance for Religious Liberty. “We commend Sen. Roger Wicker for his efforts to clarify this in law.”

The Chaplain Alliance issued a statement in October raising concern over a Department of Defense memorandum authorizing chaplains and military chapel facilities to be used for “any private ceremony.”

Members of the Chaplain Alliance continue to call on Congress to conduct hearings on the threats to the religious liberties of military chaplains and service members that the repeal of “don’t ask, don’t tell” has highlighted and showcased. Chaplains are reporting a growing climate of fear due to uncertainty and lack of clarity as to what is permissible and what is not when it comes to speaking about or addressing homosexual behaviors.

“We are aware of instances where chaplains have suffered retaliation, including having their careers threatened, for being ‘politically incorrect,’ Crews explained. “Enlisted personnel have also experienced a chilling effect on their free speech rights. There is a definite need for Congress to include a ‘Right of Conscience’ clause in Title 10 of the U.S. code to ensure that no Americans, especially those who wear the uniform, are denied their religious liberties.”

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