



PO Box 151353  
Alexandria, VA 22315  
www.chaplainalliance.org  
(571) 293-2427

CHAPLAIN ALLIANCE FOR RELIGIOUS LIBERTY  
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Contact CHAPLAIN ENDORSERS at [info@chaplainalliance.org](mailto:info@chaplainalliance.org), or call 571-293-2427

## **Chaplains to Navy: Chaplains must be allowed to provide counsel consistent with their faith**

**WASHINGTON** — The Navy has relieved a chaplain from duty allegedly because he offered counseling on sexuality consistent with his Christian faith.

Chaplain Wes Modder was “[detached for cause](#)” by his commander, Captain J.R. Fahs, after some service members who went to the chaplain for counsel filed a complaint against him for offering counsel they didn’t agree with but was nonetheless consistent with the chaplain’s religion.

“The Navy expects chaplains to provide counsel according to the tenets of their faith. No disciplinary action, then, can cite his religious views or his verbalization of them as a cause for the action,” said Chaplain (COL) Ron Crews, USA Retired, executive director of Chaplain Alliance for Religious Liberty. “Further, Congress passed language in the National Defense Authorization Act to make clear that chaplains who provide ministry from their faith tradition are protected from adverse actions by command.”

After the repeal of the so-called “don’t ask, don’t tell” policy, the Navy issued [guidance](#) to chaplains that they “are not required to take actions that are inconsistent with their religious beliefs (e.g., altering the content of sermons or religious counseling...).”

The complaint filed against Modder suggests that the counseling he provided was consistent with his denomination’s doctrinal statements on sexual behavior. The Assemblies of God’s doctrinal position on sexual behavior is similar to the vast majority of Christian, Jewish, and Muslim teachings on the subject.

“Regardless of what a person may think of a chaplain’s beliefs and how he espouses them, he certainly has the right and freedom to speak and counsel according to those beliefs,” Crews explained. “No Americans, especially those who wear the uniform and fight to protect our freedoms, should have to fear that they will be unjustly scrutinized simply for speaking about their sincerely held, biblical beliefs.”

***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.***

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