



Summer 2017 - Issue 9

*PURSUING a nation where all chaplains, and those whom they serve, freely exercise their God-given and constitutionally protected religious liberties without fear of reprisal.*

## On CALL

### A Brief History From Our Outgoing President

George Washington wrote to a New York church in 1873 his reason for fighting the Revolutionary War: *"The establishment of religious and civil liberty was the Motive which induced me to the field - the object is now attained - and it now remains to be my earnest wish and prayer, that the Citizens of the United States could make a wise and virtuous use of the blessings placed before it."*

During my 31 years of military service, I enjoyed the religious and civil liberty for which Washington fought. The critical First Amendment allowed Service men and women to find solace, comfort, and spiritual encouragement through chaplains as they daily defended the Constitution.

The Chaplain Alliance for Religious Liberty (CALL) was born out of the cautionary news that religious liberty could easily be a casualty of a "Don't ask; Don't tell" repeal. Although proponents of a repeal insisted this would not be the case, it soon became obvious this was a target of repeal proponents. After all, some of them reasoned, if one can diminish the role of faith-groups which believe homosexual behavior is wrong, then they can enjoy the

"rights" they believe were denied.

Thankfully, over 20 concerned chaplain endorsers met together and realized there was "strength in numbers." They banded together to start CALL with a strong, combined voice. With the support of Alliance Defending Freedom, CALL was launched to ensure military people could "freely exercise their God-given and constitutionally protected religious liberties without fear of reprisal." CALL-connected endorsers now speak on behalf of well over half of all military chaplains (over 2700 chaplains) and stand ready as free-exercise champions to ensure religious liberty is not denied to anyone.

Chaplain Alliance strives to be an honest broker of Truth when it comes to advising chaplains, Congress, faith groups, citizens, and military personnel. Sadly, the Internet does not always concern itself with the facts and CALL strives to always present religious liberty issues with accuracy.

We are grateful to our many liberty partners who help us keep up-to-date on religious liberty matters in the military. In spite of the challenges of a changing culture and military, chaplains continue to provide or facilitate the free exercise rights of all military personnel. America's military is a showcase of how varied religious faiths work together for the good of all Soldiers, Airmen, Marines, Guardians, or Sailors. CALL is proud to be "on stand-by" to provide support for any military person (or their families) sensing their religious liberty may be threatened.

George Washington had it right: Religious and civil liberty is a blessing that demands "wise and virtuous use." CALL is ready to do its part in ensuring this blessing remains for future generations.

Douglas E. Lee, former CALL President and retired Army Chaplain



#### Did you know?

Chaplain Alliance (CALL) speaks on behalf of over half of the nation's uniformed chaplains. CALL exists to ensure that chaplains can defend and provide for the freedom of religion and conscience that the Constitution guarantees all chaplains and those whom they serve.

## In The News:

- September 2017: Executive Director Chaplain (Colonel) Phil Wright, United States Army (Retired) met with Representatives Jody Hice (R-Georgia) and Randy Hultgren (R-Illinois) to discuss chaplaincy issues and religious liberty in the military.

- August 2017: Chaplain Alliance For Religious Liberty commended the Trump administration for its decision to further clarify its policy concerning service in the military by transgender individuals with a presidential memorandum.

- August 2017: Chaplain Alliance passed the torch of leadership from CH (COL) Ron Crews, USA (Ret.) to CH (COL) Phil Wright, USA (Ret.).

- August 2017: Incoming Executive Director CH (COL) Phil Wright was interviewed on In The Market With Janet Parshall on the latest news on the change to the transgender policy within our military and what will happen in the months ahead.

- August 2017: CALL filed a ‘friend-of-the-court’ brief with the United States Supreme Court voicing support of Bloomfield, New Mexico’s ability to allow citizens to display a Ten Commandments monument among other historical monuments of public property.

- July 2017: CALL commended the Trump administration for its decision to repeal a controversial and expensive transgender policy to ensure that the armed services are fully focused on defending the United States and its allies.

- July 2017: Outgoing Executive Director CH (COL) Ron Crews joined Lauren Ashburn on EWTN News Nightly to provide an update on the military transgender policy.

- June 2017: CALL commended Senator Joni Ernst (R-Iowa) for her training program amendment that the Senate Armed Services Committee passed during their mark up of the National Defense Authorization Act.



## A Message From Our Incoming President

It is with the utmost humility that I assume the role of President of Chaplain Alliance for Religious Liberty (CALL). I am deeply honored by the trust of our members to allow me to serve as president of this much needed organization who works together in ensuring that not only all chaplains, but all members of our military have the opportunity to exercise their God-given rights of liberty of conscience and exercise of religion.

As I am fairly new to many of you, I would like to share a little bit about my background. I am a Pastor’s Kid (PK) or as I prefer a Theologian’s Offspring (TO). I am the second of nine children. I was born and raised in South Dakota and Missouri. I am married and blessed with four wonderful children. I served as a Parish Pastor for 3 years and I have had the privilege and honor of serving as a Navy chaplain for a total of 28 years. It has been a joy to serve the men and women who selflessly serve our nation and defend our freedoms, which includes the freedom to exercise their faith, to live out their faith as they serve our Nation. They should never be asked to give up the practice of living their faith or religion, just because they have selflessly volunteered to serve our nation in the military.

What holds CALL together on this important quest to support chaplains and all military personnel is freedom of conscience and religious liberty. We are united in pursuing a nation where all chaplains, and those whom they serve, freely exercise their God-given and constitutionally protected religious liberties without fear of reprisal. Chaplain Alliance for Religious Liberty exists to ensure that chaplains can defend and provide for the freedom of religion and conscience that the Constitution guarantees all chaplains and those whom they serve.

We need your support in prayer and financially to ensure we can accomplish that important mission and vision. We will be there for our chaplains and all military personnel and their families. We stand by to protect them as they selflessly protect all of us. I look forward to the challenges and opportunities that lay ahead. We do live in challenging and interesting times, but with God’s help we will continue to fight for freedom of conscience and the free of the exercise of religion.

Sincerely,

Rev. Craig G. Muehler  
CAPT, CHC, USN (Retired)  
President, Chaplain Alliance for Religious Liberty

*Contact the On CALL Editor for fact checking all stories in this newsletter:  
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