



## PRESS RELEASE

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### **PENTAGON LAUNCHES INVESTIGATION INTO VETERAN'S REMOVAL FROM MILITARY BASE OVER SPEECH REFERENCING GOD**

*Secretary of the Air Force calls for an investigation by the Air Force Inspector General*

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**SACRAMENTO, Calif.** – Two days after First Liberty sent a demand letter to the Air Force on behalf of their client Oscar Rodriguez, Secretary of the Air Force Deborah Lee James ordered the Air Force Inspector General to review the Air Force's actions against Mr. Rodriguez.

During a retirement ceremony held in April at Travis Air Force base, multiple uniformed Airmen assaulted Oscar Rodriguez, a thirty-three year Air Force veteran, and forcibly dragged him away for giving a speech that included the word "God." [Read more about the case and watch a video of the incident](#)

"We view the Pentagon's action today as a positive first step towards not only acknowledging that religious scripts may be used at retirement ceremonies, but also ensuring these kinds of situations are not repeated," Mike Berry, Director of Military Affairs for First Liberty Institute, says.

In a letter sent to the Air Force on June 20, First Liberty Institute attorneys asked the Air Force to acknowledge that religious scripts may be used in retirement ceremonies, to send a written apology to Mr. Rodriguez, and to hold all responsible parties accountable for the assault on Mr. Rodriguez.

On Wednesday, multiple media outlets reported that the Air Force acknowledged that religious scripts may be used in flag folding ceremonies.

"Air Force personnel may use a flag folding ceremony script that is religious for retirement ceremonies," the Air Force said in a statement. "Since retirement ceremonies are personal in nature, the script preference for a flag folding ceremony is at the discretion of the individual being honored and represents the member's views, not those of the Air Force. The Air Force places the highest value of the rights of its personnel in matters of religion and facilitates the free exercise of religion by its members."

Read more about the case at [FirstLiberty.org/Rodriguez](http://FirstLiberty.org/Rodriguez)

#### **About First Liberty Institute**

[First Liberty Institute](#) is the largest legal organization in the nation dedicated exclusively to defending religious freedom for all Americans.

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