



REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF:

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, UNITED STATES ARMY
SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND
FORT BRAGG, NORTH CAROLINA 28310

AOCH

11 April 2018

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

SUBJECT: Letter of Support for CH (MAJ) Scott Squires

1. My name is CH (COL) Keith N. Croom and I am the USASOC Command Chaplain. I am writing on behalf of CH (MAJ) Scott Squires. Scott ultimately falls under my authority for all things chaplain related. CH Squires is an endorsed Southern Baptist Chaplain and I am the senior Southern Baptist Chaplain on Fort Bragg. I answer directly to CH (MG) Paul Hurley, Chief of Army Chaplains, and the USASOC Commander, LTG Ken Tovo. I am also required by the Southern Baptist Endorser to ensure all subordinate chaplains who are Southern Baptist and in the USASOC footprint are treating soldiers and families with respect and are adhering to the guidelines of their Endorser.
2. I have been an Active Duty Army Chaplain for twenty-five years. I have a doctorate in Leadership and I am a resident War College graduate. I have served in medical units, Garrison units, infantry units, and Special Operations. I have deployed to combat several times in Iraq and Afghanistan and I have never personally witnessed a more definitive injustice towards any chaplain than this present situation with CH Squires.
3. I have known CH (MAJ) Scott Squires since October 1994. He was SSG Squires at the time and has always set the standard for professionalism as an NCO and now as a field grade Chaplain. Scott has always possessed an incredible amount of respect for the military and the strength of diversity within its ranks. The chaplaincy chose CH Squires for Advanced Civil Schooling in World Religions which requires an open mind to learn and digest views, lifestyles, and religions potentially very different than his own. He is one of the most tolerant individuals I know and understands the pluralistic setting Army Chaplains are required to work within.
4. I strongly urge the command to digest this letter and others in support of the Constitutional rights of the chaplain (see references stated in the Southern Baptist Endorsers letter to COL Rice). Religious Accommodation and religious liberty applies to ALL individuals including chaplains. This investigation has been biased against the chaplain from the beginning. The investigation centered on trying to determine CH Squires intent and attitude supporting the same sex couple attending a strong bonds retreat. Chaplains are required to "perform or provide" for all Soldiers and families. CH Squires acknowledged the restrictions placed on him by his denomination with leading a retreat where a same sex couple is attending. Therefore, he attempted to "provide" for this couple and not "perform" which follows his constitutional right and keeps him in good standing with the Southern Baptist Endorser. I would encourage the command to acknowledge the authority of the Constitution and the Law

above all in this situation and concentrate on the end state which is the same sex couple was “provided” for at great lengths. CH Squires rescheduled the retreat, provided another chaplain that can perform a retreat with a same sex couple, and supervised calling all the other couples attending to ensure they knew of the change of date and time. Therefore, the command must acknowledge the same sex couple was not only “provided” for but catered to at the expense of all other couples. I highly recommend this investigation is dismissed due to lack of focused information, lack of understanding the Constitutional rights of the chaplain, and lack of understanding the religious accommodation and religious liberty of chaplains. The same sex couple was clearly “provided” for and given all the attention required to have their needs met. However, the same is not true for the chaplain who is required by their endorsing agency to adhere to their policy and regulations. This situation is not an example of discrimination. It is an example of a same sex couple, the Equal Opportunity Representative, and the Investigating Officer not understanding the position of the chaplain regarding their own religious accommodation, religious liberty, and the Chaplain Endorsing Agencies. It also boils down to a subjective conversation between Chaplain Squires and the NCO. The substantiation of discrimination must be overturned.

5. POC for this letter is CH (COL) Keith N. Croom [REDACTED].

Keith N. Croom

Keith N. Croom
CH (COL), US ARMY
USASOC Chaplain