



**North American
Mission Board**

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March 30, 2018

Colonel William J. Rice
Commander, Special Warfare Education Group (Airborne)
United States Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School
3004 Ardennes Street, Stop A
Fort Bragg, North Carolina 28310-9610

Dear Colonel Rice,

Re: Chaplain (Major) Jerry S. Squires

Your command's recent 15-6 Investigation against Chaplain (Major) Jerry S. Squires for his inability to lead a Strong Bonds marriage retreat has recently been brought to our attention. For your information, Chaplain Squires was acting in accordance with our Religious Organization's faith-based policy given to him as his ecclesiastical endorsing agency. Such guidance is in strict compliance with a number of Department of Defense policies and regulations, including AR 165-1, Army Chaplain Corps Activities, para. 8-2a, which states that "Chaplains represent their Religious Organization (RO) and serve as commissioned officers in the U.S. Army." Further, adverse action taken against him for following his denomination's religious requirements and his own sincere religious beliefs would violate federal law and military policy, including the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution and the following statutes and regulations: 42 U.S.C. § 2000bb; National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2013 § 533, Pub. L. No. 112-239 (2012); National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2014 § 532 Pub. L. No. 113-66 (2013); DoDI 1300.17. Official adverse action taken against Chaplain Squires for following the dictates of our prescribed faith as his ecclesiastical authority would also constitute a substantial burden on the religious beliefs and practices of our Religious Organization, including the other chaplains that we endorse and service members who share our faith.

Any undue prejudice or adverse action levied against Chaplain Squires for adhering to the directives of his Religious Endorsing Agency will be viewed as a violation of controlling federal law. We are writing to provide notice that our office is prepared to consider any action necessary, including legal action, to ensure Chaplain Squires' does not face adverse action or any other form of substantial burden for adhering to the religious terms of his endorsement, and to request that you accommodate his sincerely held religious beliefs. Thank you very much for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Douglas L. Carver
Chaplain (Major General)
United States Army, Retired
Executive Director, Chaplaincy
North American Mission Board
Southern Baptist Convention

Randy Edwards
Endorser, Federal Chaplaincies
SBC Chaplaincy
North American Mission Board
Southern Baptist Convention

cc: Chaplain (MG) Paul K. Hurley, OCCH
cc: Dr. Kevin Ezell, President, North American Mission Board, SBC
cc: Dr. Russell Moore, Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission
cc: Chaplain (MAJ) Jerry S. Squires