

## Veterans Administration Announces Nationwide Policy Permitting Religious Displays at VA Facilities

*First Liberty Institute sent letter to Department earlier this year urging new policy after NH VA Medical Center came under fire from anti-religion group for Bible display*

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**Washington, DC**—Today, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs **announced** that it has updated and clarified its policies “permitting religious literature, symbols and displays at VA facilities to protect religious liberty for Veterans and families while ensuring inclusivity and nondiscrimination.” Earlier this year, First Liberty Institute sent a letter to VA Secretary Robert Wilkie urging him to issue a policy applicable to all VA facilities that permits the inclusion of a Bible in POW/MIA remembrance displays.

“This new VA policy is a welcome breath of fresh air,” said Mike Berry, Director of Military Affairs for First Liberty Institute. “On the eve of our nation’s Independence Day, this is the perfect time to honor our veterans by protecting the religious freedom for which they fought and sacrificed. The Supreme Court recently upheld the constitutionality of religious displays with historic roots such as those commonly found in VA facilities. We commend the VA for taking this necessary and positive action.”

In May, First Liberty Institute sent a letter to the VA urging a policy clarification after the Military Religious Freedom Foundation (MRFF) filed a lawsuit challenging a POW/MIA Remembrance display at the Manchester VA Medical Center that includes a Bible. First Liberty’s client, the Northeast POW/MIA Network, is the organization responsible for creating and maintaining that POW/MIA remembrance display.

The VA’s announcement also references the recent U.S. Supreme Court decision in *The American Legion v. American Humanist Association*, in which the Court upheld the constitutionality of religious displays on public property. First Liberty Institute represented The American Legion in that case.

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### About First Liberty Institute

[First Liberty Institute](http://www.firstliberty.org) is a non-profit public interest law firm and the largest legal organization in the nation dedicated exclusively to defending religious freedom for all Americans.

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