

April 12, 2018

The Honorable Heather Wilson  
Secretary of the Air Force  
1670 Air Force Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20330-1670

Dear Secretary Wilson,

We, representatives of the undersigned groups, are writing to express our thanks to you for your principled and courageous decision to uphold the right of Colonel Leland Bohannon to act in accordance with his sincerely-held religious beliefs. In December 2017, we wrote to you expressing our concern that Col. Bohannon's religious freedoms were being unlawfully disregarded when he was harshly disciplined rather than being given the religious accommodation he requested.

We take great comfort in your statement that "[t]he Air Force places a high value on the rights of its members to observe the tenets of their respective religions or to observe no religion at all."<sup>1</sup> We fully agree with your observation later in the letter that "[t]he decision on appeal applied current Air Force policy and the law." Likewise, President Trump should be greatly praised for issuing an executive order in May 2017 intended to promote free speech and religious liberty across the government.<sup>2</sup>

In closing, we wish to reiterate our appreciation for your willingness to remind the United States Air Force of the need to recognize the full scope of the law protecting the free exercise of service members' religious freedoms.

Sincerely,



Lt. General William G. Boykin, USA Ret.  
Executive Vice President  
Family Research Council

cc:

---

<sup>1</sup> Letter, Secretary of the Air Force Heather Wilson to the Honorable Vicki Hartzler, U.S. House of Representatives (April 2, 2018).

<sup>2</sup> Executive Order Promoting Free Speech and Religious Liberty, Exec. Order No. 13798, 82 Fed. Reg. 21675 (May 4, 2017). Attorney General Sessions followed up on this order with a memorandum giving further instructions to the federal government. Memorandum, Dep't of Justice, Federal Law Protections for Religious Liberty, 82 Fed. Reg. 49668 (Oct. 6, 2017). The DOJ memo relies on current law—the First Amendment, the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA), and Department of Defense Instruction (DODI) 1300.17. And, RFRA clearly "applies to the military." *United States v. Sterling*, 75 M.J. 407, 415 (C.A.A.F. 2016).

General David L. Goldfein  
Air Force Chief of Staff  
1670 Air Force Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20330-1670

cc:

Lt. General Anthony J. Rock  
Air Force Inspector General  
4800 Mark Center Drive  
Alexandria, VA 22350-1500

Signed:

Jim DeMint  
Former United States Senator  
South Carolina

Col. Edwin J. Meese, USA Ret.  
Former United States Attorney General

The Honorable J. Kenneth Blackwell  
Chairman  
Constitutional Congress, Inc.

Bob McEwen  
Former United States Representative  
Ohio

Lt. Col. Kerry A. Knowles, USMC Ret.

Maj. Ray Sundman USA Resv. Ret.  
GS 14, USA Material Command, Ret.

Col. J. Keith Morgan, USA Ret.  
Family Ministries  
Cru Military

Donald Moore  
NCR Military Summit

Gary L. Bauer  
President  
American Values

William J. Becker, Jr.  
Founder/President  
Freedom X

Frank Gaffney  
President  
Center for Security Policy

Andrea Lafferty  
President  
Traditional Values Coalition

MG Paul E. Vallely, USA Ret.  
Chairman and CEO  
Stand Up America US

John B. Wells, Commander, USN Ret.  
Executive Director  
Military-Veterans Advocacy, Inc.

CH (COL) Ronald A Crews, USA Ret.  
Endorsing Agent  
Grace Churches International

Elaine Donnelly  
President  
Center for Military Readiness

CH (COL) Phil Wright, USA Ret.  
Executive Director  
Chaplain Alliance for Religious Liberty

Michael P. Farris  
President, CEO, and General Counsel  
Alliance Defending Freedom

Thomas P. Kilgannon  
President  
Freedom Alliance

ADM James A. Lyons, Jr., USN Ret.  
President and CEO  
LION Associates, LLC

Richard Thompson  
President and Chief Counsel  
Thomas More Law Center

Mathew Staver  
Founder and Chairman  
Liberty Counsel

Tim Wildmon  
President  
American Family Association

Sandy Rios  
Director of Government Affairs  
American Family Association

Arthur A. Schulcz, Sr.  
Executive Director  
International Conference of  
Evangelical Chaplain Endorsers

Peggy Dau  
International Civil Rights Activist

Lloyd J Goodnow, USMC Ret.  
Owner and CEO  
Goodnow Frontier Security Services

BGen. Jim Walker, USMC Ret.  
Deputy Director, International Projects  
Samaritan's Purse

Dr. Carol Swain  
Former Professor, Political Science and Law  
Vanderbilt University  
Former Associate Professor, Politics and Public Policy  
Princeton University

MG Brian Geehan, USA Ret.

Daryl Worley, PE  
Owner  
Worley Consulting