

Air Force Officer Punished for His Christian Beliefs

U.S. Air Force Col. Michael Madrid is a flight surgeon and former naval aviator with 26 years of decorated service. He's also a Christian who believes in biblical marriage between one man and one woman.

And because of those beliefs, his attorneys affiliated with the First Liberty Institute claim, he has been punished and now the Air Force is attempting to destroy his career. First Liberty asserts that he's being discriminated against on the basis of his religious beliefs and his beliefs relating to marriage to human sexuality.

"Colonel Madrid is the latest victim of the extreme political correctness that is destroying our military," First Liberty Director of Military Affairs Mike Berry said. "The military should never discriminate against a service member because of his religious beliefs."

First Liberty is holding a press conference that began at 3 p.m. EDT. You can watch the event via a Facebook Live streaming event by clicking [here](#). Shortly after the event ends, the archived video will also be available at that link.

The Facts of the Case

In 2014, an openly homosexual airman who worked with Madrid was court-martialed and found guilty of serious misconduct. During the court-martial process, however, the airman accused Madrid of having made derogatory comments about homosexuality.

The colonel denied making such comments and submitted to a thorough Air Force investigation, where he explained that he holds traditional Christian beliefs about marriage. The Air

Force found the allegations unsubstantiated, cleared Madrid of the charges and closed the investigation.

Madrid's real troubles began last year when he was placed under a new commanding officer who, without any new evidence, allegations or investigation, determined Madrid lied during the original investigation and was guilty of making derogatory comments about homosexuality.

The new commanding officer placed a Letter of Admonishment in his permanent record, which essentially guarantees Madrid—whose otherwise stellar record was likely to land him a flag officer promotion to brigadier general—will never be promoted. It's been a devastating blow to the colonel.

"I feel like the full power of the Air Force is coming down on me because of my faith," he said. "Now, after more than a quarter-century of service to this nation, I feel like I constantly have to look over my shoulder. It's incredibly intimidating."

Attempting to Restore His Reputation

First Liberty has taken the first step in attempting to restore his reputation, however, by sending a demand letter, asking that the Letter of Admonishment be rescinded.

Berry stated:

"Colonel Madrid submitted to an extensive military investigation, and the Air Force cleared him. Major General McCoy has no right to ignore the rule of law and arbitrarily decide, more than two years later and without any new evidence, that he can punish Col. Madrid.

"At First Liberty Institute, we've seen multiple cases in which military officials have refused to tolerate service members' traditional religious beliefs. Colonel Madrid doesn't hide the fact that he is a devout Christian.

“We are concerned that Major General [John E.] McCoy (Air National Guard Assistant to the Commander, Air Education and Training Command, Joint Base San Antonio-Randolph, Texas) judged and punished Madrid—a decorated Air Force officer—because he became aware of Colonel Madrid’s traditional religious views. If so, that not only harms the military, but it is illegal.

“Religious intolerance and discrimination against anyone in the military is inexcusable. We ask the Air Force to take immediate action to hold Major General McCoy accountable and to provide justice and due process for Colonel Madrid.”

[Click here to learn more about Madrid’s case.](#) {eoa}