

Does the Navy Need an Atheist Chaplain?

An avowed secular atheist and member of the Humanist Society stood in court recently and asked to have his group recognized as a religious organization, so he could serve as a Navy chaplain. What the court did not hear is that the Humanist Society is part of the American Humanist Association, an atheist organization that publicly mocks all religious beliefs.

For soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines who need it, chaplains perform religious services, pray on the battlefield, ensure access to religious Scripture, and provide religious comfort to the men and women in the field and to their families back at home. These atheists cannot do that.

Military chaplains predate the founding of our country. As commander of the Continental Army, General George Washington ensured that chaplains were available to meet the religious needs of our nation's soldiers. Just like today, service members were uprooted from their communities, and deployed to serve for months and years at a time. That is why our courts have confirmed that denying men and women in the military access to chaplains would violate both the Establishment Clause and the Free Exercise Clause of the U.S. Constitution.

It should not even be a matter of discussion that atheists cannot fulfill the spiritual needs of our troops. There are already limited spots for chaplains in the military.

Considering the broad diversity of America's service members, not every soldier gets a chaplain of his own faith. That is why chaplains must be able to support and respect the value of religion generally and the rights of every religious believer individually.

In the end, a soldier dying on the battlefield deserves to know that the chaplain coming to his aid respects his religious beliefs, and does not mock or belittle them.

The Humanist Society is an atheist organization and cannot fill any religious role in the military without depriving our troops of a vital constitutional right.

For the original article, visit [Eagle Forum](#).