

Highly Decorated Army Chaplain Faces Charges for 'Adhering to Religious Beliefs'

A United States Army chaplain and a chaplain's assistant face possible disciplinary action over a case involving a marriage retreat and a same-sex couple.

First Liberty Institute, which is defending Chaplain Scott Squires, and wrote a letter on behalf of SSG Kacie Griffin, says the two "complied with Army rules but face reprimand for adhering to religious beliefs," according to a news release.

The nonprofit public interest law firm says an "Army investigator recommended that Squires be found guilty of 'dereliction of duty,'" which means the decorated chaplain faces a possible court-martial and time in a military prison for rescheduling a marriage retreat, the news release states.

"I simply did what I'm required to do under Army regulations and my endorser's rules," Squires said in a statement. "I am shocked that I would even be investigated, let alone threatened with punishment, for following the rules."

"Chaplain Scott Squires faces potential disciplinary action by the United States Army for adhering to his church's religious teaching on marriage," the news release states. "Following a complaint, an Army investigator concluded that Chaplain Squires was guilty of discrimination when Squires explained he could not conduct a Strong Bonds marriage retreat with same-sex couples due to the requirements of his chaplain-endorsing agency, the North American Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention."

Squires made sure the soldier was included in the next available Strong Bonds retreat run by another chaplain who did not have restrictions. However, the investigator decided the chaplain's behavior amounted to discrimination and deserved a reprimand, according to the news release.

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