

Obama Administration 'Strongly' Opposes Religious Freedom in the Military

In a statement of administration policy from the executive office of the president released Tuesday, the Obama administration stated that it opposes a proposed amendment to the National Defense Authorization Act that would protect the religious freedom of men and women in the armed forces.

In a section titled "Expansion and Implementation of Protection of Rights of Conscience of Members of the Armed Forces and Chaplains of Such Members," the statement says, "The administration strongly objects to section 530, which would require the Armed Forces to accommodate, except in cases of military necessity, 'actions and speech' reflecting the 'conscience, moral principles or religious beliefs of the member.'

"By limiting the discretion of commanders to address potentially problematic speech and actions within their units," it continues, "this provision would have a significant adverse effect on good order, discipline, morale, and mission accomplishment."

Alliance Defending Freedom Litigation Counsel Kellie Fiedorek says this position is unconstitutional.

"Service members shouldn't be denied the very constitutional liberties they have volunteered to defend," she comments. "It is clear that the **Obama administration** opposes constitutional religious freedom for service men and women, and this is the latest example of this administration's hostility toward religious service members.

"Antagonism toward people of faith—namely Christians—in the

military is real, and it is disappointing that the president is unwilling to support laws that protect and defend the basic liberty of **religious freedom**."