



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

May 13, 2013

The Honorable Chuck Hagel
Secretary of Defense
1000 Defense Pentagon
Washington, DC 20301

Dear Secretary Hagel,

It has come to our attention that as recently as April 23, 2013, Pentagon officials met with Mr. Michael “Mikey” Weinstein, Founder and President of the Military Religious Freedom Foundation (MRFF), to discuss religious freedom in the military. As we have great concern regarding numerous inflammatory statements from Mr. Weinstein in recent weeks, we are seeking further clarification on the meeting that took place late last month.

In a recent posting in his own words, Mr. Weinstein characterized men and women of the Christian faith as, “monsters who terrorize their fellow Americans” and offered consent to labeling individual faith based family groups as “hate groups.” Mr. Weinstein also urged exposure of these “pathologically anti-gay, Islamophobic, and rabidly intolerant agitators,” equating them as “die-hard enemies of the United States Constitution.” There are additional previous examples where Mr. Weinstein compares men and women of faith serving in the Pentagon to the Taliban and Al Qaeda, and followers of the Christian faith to that of Hitler and Stalin. Also of concern are statements equating spiritual expression to “spiritual rape” and sedition and treason within the military. Such sentiments are consistent throughout Mr. Weinstein’s printed and other media materials.

We question the Pentagon’s judgment and reasoning in accepting a meeting from someone with a history of such statements and sentiments like Mr. Weinstein. We would respectfully request clarification on the nature of the meeting and detailed information regarding the following items:

1. Confirmation of a meeting between Pentagon officials and representatives from MRFF, as well as a list of meeting attendees, both military and civilian;
2. The purpose of the meeting, specifically whether the meeting was organized to inform deliberative policy for the Armed Forces, as well as a summary of the meeting’s discussion;
3. Prior to arranging this meeting, were Pentagon officials aware of Mr. Weinstein’s previous statements, including those referenced above?
4. In addition to any meetings already held, are there additional meetings scheduled?

Noting that this is a particularly critical time for the Department of Defense as they finalize regulations protecting the moral and religious convictions of service members and military chaplains, we would appreciate your immediate attention to this matter.

Thank you and we look forward to the favor of a reply.

Sincerely,


JOHN FLEMING, M.D.
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Member of Congress


JOSEPH R. PITTS
Member of Congress


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Member of Congress


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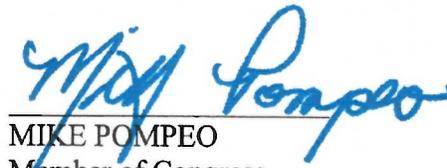

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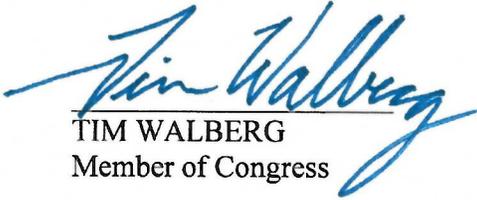
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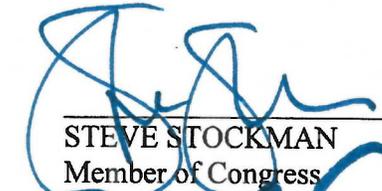

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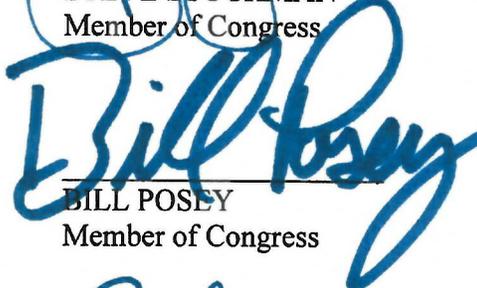

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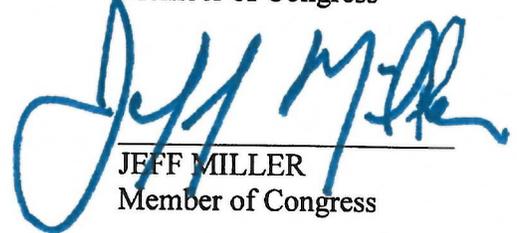

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