



MILITARY RELIGIOUS FREEDOM
f o u n d a t i o n

Mr. Jeff Bezos, CEO
Amazon dot com, Inc.
440 Terry Avenue North
Seattle, Washington
98109-5210

Monday, May 7, 2018

Dear Mr. Bezos:

I am Mikey Weinstein, Founder and President of the Military Religious Freedom Foundation (MRFF). MRFF is a very prominent and successful, nonprofit, civil rights advocacy organization dedicated to ensuring that all members of the United States Armed Forces fully receive the Constitutional guarantee of both freedom of religion and freedom from religion, to which they and all Americans are entitled. We fight for our service members' rights, so that they can fight for ours. We are deeply pleased to be supported through your wonderful Amazon Smile program, and I personally thank you for making that available so that many Amazon customers can help serve our clients.

And we DO have clients! MRFF represents nearly 56,000 (and counting) sailors, soldiers, marines, airman, service academy/ROTC/OCS/OTS cadets and midshipmen, and veterans from all United States military branches, and many in the combat zones—yet even there, they are not free from the fundamentalist Christian scourge that is too evident and inextricably intertwined within the U.S. military today. Daily I receive reports of improper proselytizing, misuse of authority, and outrageous impositions of religion by those who should know that the Constitution, its construing caselaw and DoD directives strictly forbid such illicit behavior. And daily we act to build and rebuild the wall of separation between church and state, and stand strong against attacks on the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning (LGBTQ) service members.

The unconstitutional perpetrators we aggressively engage and relentlessly confront are, almost always, senior ranking, fundamentalist Christians who refuse to restrict their proselytizing to the time, place and manner mandated by the Constitution and the military law-backed regulations of the Department of Defense.

Our work often brings us into direct conflict with another group—Alliance Defending Freedom (ADF). Frankly, we disagree with ADF's positions on almost everything in law and policy. For years we've crossed swords and fought for our respective opposing views. But it is one thing to fight for ideals, and it's another to marginalize and suppress others—even those you vehemently disagree with. And that is what's happening when ADF is branded a "hate" group and thrown out of the Amazon Smile program.

Our beloved brothers and sisters at the marvelous and courageous Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) are longtime and valued allies of MRFF and they always will be. Irrespective of that immutable fact, on this particular and specific matter, MRFF and SPLC simply disagree. Even brothers and sisters can disagree. Indeed, it turns out that even the late Antonin Scalia and Ruth Bader Ginsburg were close personal friends.

Please reconsider, Mr. Bezos. In my long years of fighting for what's Constitutionally right, I've come to personally know several senior ADF lawyers extremely well. Their religiously-based legal positions, I and MRFF TOTALLY reject. However, their integrity, compassion, character, empathy, honor, and concern for their fellow humans I will steadfastly affirm. I have seen it and I have lived it. As seemingly incomprehensible as it may seem, sometimes hell actually DOES freeze over. I consider them dear friends and I assure you that I don't use that term lightly.

The American way is not to impose "truth" by power—be it economic or government—but by free speech, robust debate, and conflict in the courts. Though I and MRFF fervently disagree 100% with ADF's views, I will stand up here and now and respect their fight for conscience, for their understanding of human life, and their commitment to their conception of religious freedom. However profoundly wrong they are on the law attendant to the foregoing, and from MRFF's perspective they clearly ARE universally wrong, they do not deserve controversial labels or being shoved to the side by the inestimable and raw power your formidable firm wields.

There are surely a plethora of Christian religious extremist organizations who richly deserve to be ignominiously branded as "haters." However, as to ADF, the baby ought not be thrown out with the bath water. If I had not personally experienced their principled humanity, I would never be writing you today.

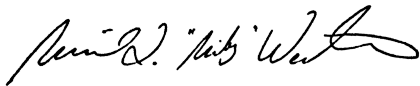
I know that, given my and MRFF's very public profile and well established positions of comprehensive and unyielding support for LGBTQ rights (MRFF currently represents 1,012 LGBTQ military and DoD civilian clients), some observers may initially be rendered incredulous by my request to you. But, it is nonetheless the right thing to do.

Respectfully, Mr. Bezos, I ask you to reconsider and kindly reverse your decision and permit ADF once again to participate in the Amazon Smile program. Your customers are more than able to decide who to support—please be "pro-choice," and give them that precious freedom.

If you have any further questions, I'd be most pleased to answer them at your convenience.

I live in your old stomping grounds and the town of your birth, Albuquerque, New Mexico and my number is 505-250-7727.

Very Respectfully,



Michael L. "Mikey" Weinstein, Esq.,
 Founder and President,
 Military Religious Freedom Foundation
 505-250-7727