



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



CAIR

MRFF, CAIR Call on Army Secretary to Protect Muslim Soldier Facing Discrimination

(WASHINGTON D.C., 6/10/2022) – The Military Religious Freedom Foundation (MRFF), a nationally recognized civil rights and advocacy organization fighting for the constitutionally guaranteed separation of church and state for U.S. Military Service Members and Veterans and the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), the nation’s largest Muslim civil rights and advocacy organization, today called on Secretary of the Army Christine Wormuth to intervene to stop the expulsion of an African-American Muslim service member who has been targeted due to anti-Muslim discrimination.

On June 10, MRFF Founder and President Mikey Weinstein sent a letter <https://www.militaryreligiousfreedom.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/1LT-Alimi-letter-6-10-22.pdf>

to Army Secretary Christine Wormuth, writing, in part: “1LT [Ize] Alimi is a member of the U.S. Army on active duty and is currently assigned to 1/509th Battalion Headquarters and Headquarters Company (HHC), Fort Polk, Louisiana. 1LT Alimi is a Muslim African-American male originally from West Africa (Benin). 1LT Alimi’s career in the U.S. Army took a dramatic turn in a very short amount of time.”

First Lt. Alimi had received numerous positive work performance reviews in which he was recommended for increased responsibility. This changed after one person alleged he used derogatory language toward a minority while on duty. One witness to the alleged incident submitted a sworn statement contradicting that Alimi said anything derogatory. Another member of Alimi’s unit submitted a sworn statement that another first hand witness to the incident said they never heard the alleged derogatory language and felt the actions taken against Alimi were wrong.

A third service member from another unit who had worked closely with Alimi, and a self-identified member of the minority allegedly disparaged by Alimi, also submitted a statement attesting to Alimi’s outstanding character. Despite the wealth of positive job performance reviews and statements supporting Alimi’s strong character, he is being unjustly discharged from the Army.

In a separate but also very recent incident at Fort Polk, another First Lieutenant of the Islamic faith was similarly an object of attack by her Army chain of command due to her religion and skin color.

SEE: Salon article "Military was told to purge 'extremists' after Jan. 6 — so it went after a Black Muslim officer"

<https://www.salon.com/2022/05/08/military-was-told-to-purge-extremists-after-jan-6--so-it-went-after-a-black-muslim-officer/>

MRFF's Founder and President, Michael L. "Mikey" Weinstein said, "Tragically, there exists inside the Department of Defense (DoD) an unconstitutionally pervasive and pernicious pattern and practice of systemic anti-Islamic oppression at all levels of the chain of command. 1Lt. Ize Alimi is another victim of this evil as is 1Lt Khadijah X. What generally fuels this unbridled hatred, bigotry and prejudice within DoD is fundamentalist Christian nationalism, supremacy, exceptionalism and exclusivity."

"There is ample evidence that Alimi has a strong character and has consistently done good work, including testimony from witnesses who debunked the false allegation being used as an excuse to punish him," said CAIR Director of Research and Advocacy Corey Saylor. "Removing him from his job because of thinly veiled anti-Muslim bigotry would be a gross injustice."

The Military Religious Freedom Foundation (MRFF) is dedicated to ensuring that all members of the United States Armed Forces fully receive the Constitutional guarantee of religious freedom to which they and all Americans are entitled by virtue of the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment.

CAIR's mission is to protect civil rights, enhance understanding of Islam, promote justice, and empower American Muslims.

END

CONTACT: MRFF's Founder and President Michael L. "Mikey" Weinstein, 505-250-7727, mikey@militaryreligiousfreedom.org; CAIR National Deputy Director Edward Ahmed Mitchell, 404-285-9530, e-Mitchell@cair.com; CAIR Government Affairs Director Robert McCaw, 202-742-6448, rmccaw@cair.com; CAIR National Communications Director Ibrahim Hooper, 202-744-7726, ihooper@cair.com CAIR National Communications Coordinator Ismail Allison, 202-770-6280, iallison@cair.com