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## Project 535



Members of U.S. House Speak Out for Embattled Military Chaplain  
 Amelia Wigton  
 December 19, 2005

Members of the U.S. House are [speaking out](#) on behalf of a military chaplain who will lose his job next month for ending his prayers in the name of Jesus and using certain “offensive” verses in sermons and funeral services that point to Christ as the only way to heaven.

Rep. Walter Jones (R-North Carolina) and Rep. Trent Franks (R-Arizona) have come out in the chaplain’s support. “I truly believe the President of the United States -- if he understands the realities of this situation -- will respond in a decisive manner,” said Rep. Franks.

The case of [Lt. Gordon James Klingenschmitt](#), chaplain and priest from the Evangelical Episcopal Church, illustrates that restrictions on chaplains in the military have gone too far. Military chaplains have been criticized for “religious insensitivity” for preaching in the name of Jesus, for preaching the Gospel message, and for saying that there is only one way to heaven.

Klingenschmitt has become a reluctant whistleblower for religious freedom violations within the Navy. He was [reprimanded](#) for not applying standards of “pluralism” set by his superiors.

The [American Center for Law and Justice](#), led by Chief Counsel Jay Sekulow, has circulated a “[Petition to Protect Military Prayer](#).” The petition calls on President Bush to sign an Executive Order to protect the preaching and proselytizing of military Chaplains. More than 72,000 people have signed the petition, and the number continues to increase.

“It is truly tragic that the chaplains who minister to those fighting for our freedom are themselves having to do battle for their own freedom to state their beliefs,” said Lanier Swann, Concerned Women for America’s Director of Government Relations. “Chaplains fill a vital and historic position in the military, and the idea that they would come under attack is outrageous. These ministers should be commended for their brave work, not condemned.”

“We are thankful that key representatives in Washington are

paying attention to this issue, and that necessary means will be used to support military chaplains.”

Check back regularly to CWA's Website, [www.cwfa.org](http://www.cwfa.org), for more on this important story and any legislation that results to protect military chaplains.

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Concerned Women for America  
Legislative Action Committee  
1015 Fifteenth St. N.W., Suite 1100  
Washington, D.C. 20005  
Phone: (202) 488-7000  
Fax: (202) 488-0806