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Roberta Combs, President

Chaplain Gordon Klingenschmitt, Who Was About to be Kicked Out of United States Navy -- After His Fight to be Allowed to Pray in the Name of Jesus at All Times -- Gets Reprieve Thursday From 3-Judge Federal Panel

On Thursday, a three-judge panel (on the U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in the District of Columbia,) temporarily blocked the United States Navy from kicking out of the Navy an evangelical chaplain, Chaplain (Lt) Gordon J. Klingenschmitt, an Air Force Academy graduate, who has been fighting to overturn restrictions on prayer in the military, specifically allowing military chaplains to pray in the name of Jesus at all times.

With the federal court of appeals' ruling, Chaplain Klingenschmitt will be allowed to stay on active duty at least another week. The court meanwhile will decide whether it should grant a longer term injunction that would keep Chaplain Klingenschmitt in the Navy, at least until his lawsuit against Navy Secretary Donald C. Winter is heard. Chaplain Klingenschmitt's attorney, William Farley, said: "We will get to the bottom of this. We will find out why everything started to fall apart after he began praying in the name of Jesus."

Chaplain Klingenschmitt said regarding the decision by the three-judge panel, "I consider this a small miracle at the eleventh hour, but my career still dangles by a thread since this stay will probably only last a week. Next week, I pray the court of appeals makes a more permanent decision. But for now, God has answered our prayers."

During the past two years, the Christian Coalition of America played a major role in forcing the Navy and the Air Force to repeal regulations the two services had adopted early last year which forbade military chaplains from praying in the name of Jesus during military functions other than worship services. The provision agreed to last September 25th by the House and Senate conferees debating the final Defense Authorization bill rolls back the current Air Force and Navy regulations which had overturned 200+ years of tradition allowing military chaplains to pray in the name of Jesus and according to their faith requirements.

At the time, Christian Coalition of America President Roberta Combs said, "**The decision by Congress to force the Air Force and Navy to rescind their unconstitutional restrictions on religious freedom for military chaplains is a victory for free speech. I urge the House and Senate Armed Services Committees to conduct oversight hearings early next year to ensure that military chaplains can pray as they have been able to pray for the past 200+ years of American history. Congress cannot allow the Air Force and the Navy or any other service to adopt politically-correct guidelines restricting the religious freedom of chaplains ever again.**"

The Air Force had adopted restrictive guidelines on February 9, 2006 and the Navy had adopted similar restrictive guidelines on February 21, 2006. The Air Force and Navy had surrendered to atheist activists and left-wing Members of Congress in



adopting these ill-advised regulations. **According to the September 25th agreement signed by the House and Senate conferees, the Secretary of the Air Force must reinstate the policy that was set forth in Air Force Directive 52-1 dated 1 July 1999 and the Secretary of the Navy must reinstate the policy set forth in Secretary of Navy Instruction 1730.7B dated October 12, 2000.**