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AFLC Files Opening Brief in U.S. Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit in Defense of Tulsa Police Captain's Religious Freedom

Denver, Colorado (March 11, 2013) — Today, the American Freedom Law Center (AFLC), a national nonprofit Judeo-Christian law firm, filed its opening brief in the United States Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit in defense of Captain Paul Fields, a Tulsa, Oklahoma police officer who was summarily punished for refusing to attend and refusing to assign officers under his command who shared his religious beliefs to attend a mandated Islamic proselytizing event held at a local mosque. The event included mosque tours, meeting local Muslims and leadership, watching the weekly prayer service, and receiving presentations on Islamic beliefs.

A federal judge in Oklahoma ruled last December that the City of Tulsa and two of its senior police officials, Chief of Police Chuck Jordan and Deputy Chief of Police Daryl Webster, did not violate Captain Fields' constitutional rights. AFLC is appealing this ruling.

In February 2011, Captain Fields, a dedicated police officer and a devout Christian, questioned the lawfulness of an order compelling officer attendance at the "Law Enforcement Appreciation Day" hosted by the Islamic Society of Tulsa. For doing so, Fields was punitively transferred, subjected to an Internal Affairs investigation, and ultimately suspended without pay for two weeks. Major Julie Harris, Fields' immediate supervisor, candidly admitted during her sworn testimony that the City retaliated against Fields for exercising his constitutional rights.

Robert Muise, Co-Founder and Senior Counsel of AFLC, commented: "The evidence is overwhelming that Captain Fields was punished because he, a Christian, objected to an order mandating officer attendance at an event that included Islamic proselytizing. This is a direct violation of his clearly established constitutional rights. Consequently, the lower court was wrong, and we are hopeful that the Tenth Circuit will reverse that ruling and remedy this injustice."

The City will have 30 days to respond to the brief, and AFLC will then have 14 days to file a reply. AFLC is also requesting oral argument, which will be held before a three-judge panel in Denver, Colorado. No argument date has been scheduled.

The *American Freedom Law Center* is a Judeo-Christian law firm that fights for faith and freedom. It accomplishes its mission through litigation, public policy initiatives, and related activities. It does not charge for its services. The Law Center is supported by contributions from individuals, corporations, and foundations, and is recognized by the IRS as a section 501(c)(3) organization. Visit us at www.americanfreedomlawcenter.org.

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