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AFLC Files Motion Asking Federal Court to Rule in Favor of Tulsa Police Captain: City Violated His Religious Liberty

Tulsa, Oklahoma (August 14, 2012) — Today, after months of discovery, the American Freedom Law Center (AFLC), a non-profit Judeo-Christian public interest law firm, filed a motion for summary judgment in federal court in Oklahoma on behalf of Captain Paul Fields, a veteran of the Tulsa Police Department who was summarily punished for refusing to attend an Islamic proselytizing event held at a local mosque because it violated his Christian beliefs. The motion, which was drafted and filed by AFLC Co-Founder and Senior Counsel Robert Muise, argues that the undisputed facts demonstrate that the City of Tulsa and its senior police officials retaliated against Captain Field for exercising his constitutional right to the free exercise of religion.

Muise commented, "In light of the undisputed facts and controlling law, Captain Fields is entitled to a judgment in his favor that the City and its senior police officials violated his clearly established constitutional rights by ordering him to engage in conduct that was contrary to his Christian beliefs and then punishing him for not obeying the unlawful order. In fact, during discovery, Captain Field's immediate supervisor, Major Julie Harris, admitted in her sworn deposition that the police department retaliated against Captain Fields for exercising his rights."

In February 2011, a senior Tulsa police official ordered officers to attend a "Law Enforcement Appreciation Day" hosted by the Islamic Society of Tulsa at a local mosque. The event was scheduled for Friday, March 4, 2011. Friday is the "holy day" or "Sabbath" for Islam.

The so-called "appreciation day" included "Mosque tours," which involved religious proselytizing, meeting "Local Muslims & Leadership," watching the "weekly congregational prayer service," and receiving presentations on Islamic "beliefs." Never in Captain Fields' lengthy and stellar career with the police department has an officer been ordered to attend an

“appreciation” day at a religious venue. For this reason, Captain Fields believed (correctly) that the order was unlawful in that it violated the United States Constitution, which he swore to uphold as a uniformed officer.

When Captain Fields, a Christian, objected to the order on religious grounds, he was immediately stripped of his command, transferred to another division, and subjected to an internal investigation. Following the investigation, he was suspended without pay for two weeks and his punitive transfer was made permanent.

Rather than cave in to the political pressure, Captain Fields is fighting back with the help of the American Freedom Law Center, which is providing legal representation to Captain Fields at no charge.

You can view the legal brief filed today by AFLC Senior Counsel Robert Muise at the following web address:

<http://www.americanfreedomlawcenter.org/uploads/caseapps/997cf86bc3d1859a9f3ee88500ede64242ff4b5f.pdf>

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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