

MIKE ROGERS, ALABAMA, CHAIRMAN
JOE WILSON, SOUTH CAROLINA
MICHAEL R. TURNER, OHIO
DOUG LAMBORN, COLORADO
ROBERT J. WITTMAN, VIRGINIA
AUSTIN SCOTT, GEORGIA
SAM GRAVES, MISSOURI
ELISE M. STEFANIK, NEW YORK
SCOTT DESJARLAIS, TENNESSEE
TRENT KELLY, MISSISSIPPI
MIKE GALLAGHER, WISCONSIN
MATT GAETZ, FLORIDA
DON BACON, NEBRASKA
JIM BANKS, INDIANA
JACK BERGMAN, MICHIGAN
MICHAEL WALTZ, FLORIDA
LISA C. McCLAIN, MICHIGAN
RONNY JACKSON, TEXAS
PAT FALLON, TEXAS
CARLOS A. GIMENEZ, FLORIDA
NANCY MACE, SOUTH CAROLINA
BRAD FINSTAD, MINNESOTA
DALE W. STRONG, ALABAMA
MORGAN LUTTRELL, TEXAS
JENNIFER A. KIGGANS, VIRGINIA
NICK LALOTA, NEW YORK
JAMES C. MOYLAN, GUAM
MARK ALFORD, MISSOURI
CORY MILLS, FLORIDA
RICHARD MCCORMICK, GEORGIA
LANCE GOODEN, TEXAS

CHRIS VIESON, STAFF DIRECTOR

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

U.S. House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515-6035

ONE HUNDRED EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS

ADAM SMITH, WASHINGTON,
RANKING MEMBER
JOE COURTNEY, CONNECTICUT
JOHN GARAMENDI, CALIFORNIA
DONALD NORCROSS, NEW JERSEY
RUBEN GALLEG0, ARIZONA
SETH MOULTON, MASSACHUSETTS
SALUD O. CARBAJAL, CALIFORNIA
RO KHANNA, CALIFORNIA
BILL KEATING, MASSACHUSETTS
ANDY KIM, NEW JERSEY
CHRISSE HOULAHAN, PENNSYLVANIA
ELISSA SLOTKIN, MICHIGAN
MIKIE SHERRILL, NEW JERSEY
VERONICA ESCOBAR, TEXAS
JARED F. GOLDEN, MAINE
SARA JACOBS, CALIFORNIA
MARILYN STRICKLAND, WASHINGTON
PATRICK RYAN, NEW YORK
JEFF JACKSON, NORTH CAROLINA
GABE VASQUEZ, NEW MEXICO
CHRISTOPHER R. DELUZZIO, PENNSYLVANIA
JILL N. TOKUDA, HAWAII
DONALD G. DAVIS, NORTH CAROLINA
JENNIFER L. McCLELLAN, VIRGINIA
TERRI A. SEWELL, ALABAMA
STEVEN HORSFORD, NEVADA
JIMMY PANETTA, CALIFORNIA
MARC A. VEASEY, TEXAS

BRIAN GARRETT, MINORITY STAFF DIRECTOR

July 12, 2024

The Honorable Christine Wormuth
Secretary of the Army
101 Army Pentagon
Washington, DC 20310

Dear Secretary Wormuth,

We write today to express our outrage at a Directorate of Emergency Services (DES) training held at Fort Liberty that characterized pro-life organizations as “terrorist groups.” The training labeled several prominent and well-respected pro-life groups as violent extremists. The training also indicated the members of these organizations are threats to the safety of military installations and designated symbols of pro-life groups, including state-issued pro-life license plates, as indicators of terrorism. This is truly shocking for an organization that insists on treating everyone with “dignity and respect.”

This disturbing training confirmed our fears about the recent publication of Army Directive 2024-07 (Handling Protest, Extremist, and Criminal Gang Activities). That is, the Army is utilizing an overly broad policy to police the speech of conservative servicemembers, quiet dissent, and require servicemembers who believe in conservative ideals to hide their identities for fear of retaliation from their commands. But because the Army has yet to provide the training materials to Congress in contravention of their obligation, we can only assume that the training interpreted the Army’s definition of extremist activities to include pro-life organizations as “advocating or engaging in unlawful force or violence to achieve goals that are political, religious, or discriminatory or ideological in nature.” The Army’s repeated statements before Congress and the public that all viewpoints, including conservative viewpoints, are welcome, are belied not only by this policy, but also, by this is training.

Even more disturbing is who this training was conducted for: 47 uniformed soldiers tasked with guarding the access points for Fort Liberty, one of the Army’s largest military installations. Training the installation gate guards to ensure that servicemembers and their families who have pro-life license plates should be considered suspicious and possible terroristic threats to the installation, is not only absurd but dangerous. Young soldiers trained to treat certain state-issued license plates as a terrorist threat heightens the risk that they will be involved in a needlessly confrontational situation with otherwise permissible drivers accessing Fort Liberty. Disturbingly, it also requires soldiers at the gate to profile conservatives for their

political leanings.

It is crucial that our military maintains political neutrality and respect for diverse viewpoints within the bounds of the law. Regardless of any base commanders' concern for protests from potential groups, the idea that such protected constitutional activities by lawful organizations qualifies them as terrorists is absurd. We urge the Army to immediately issue a correction to all servicemembers who received this briefing, to implement rules to ensure officials do not make similar claims in the Army's name in the future, and to discipline those individuals responsible for spreading such false and divisive claims. Additionally, the Army must reassess Army Directive 2024-07, to ensure that certain conservative and religious beliefs that are outside the progressive left ideology popular in military leadership, are not swept in as extremist activity for "advocating or engaging in unlawful force or violence to achieve goals that are political, religious, or discriminatory or ideological in nature."

With these concerns in mind, we request answers to the following questions by no later than July 25, 2024:

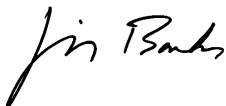
1. What was the extent of the Directorate of Emergency Services leadership's involvement in creating the presentation? Was this presentation approved by Directorate leadership? If not, who approved it?
2. Fort Liberty's statement claims that the slides were not "vetted by the appropriate approval authorities." Who were the appropriate approval authorities in this situation?
3. What are the processes in place for reviewing and approving the content of such briefings? And why were they not followed in this situation?
4. How long has Fort Liberty utilized these particular slides? How long has the Army utilized the standard deck of slides?
5. Where else have these altered slides been used? Have any other organizations within the Army utilized an altered deck of slides for their training?
6. Can you confirm that the Army has reviewed and approved all anti-terrorism guidance and training? Can you verify that none of this guidance and training violates, or encourages service members to violate, constitutionally protected speech?
7. Does the Army or Fort Liberty officials have any plans to issue a correction or disavowal to those service members who attended this briefing to instruct them that these pro-life organizations are not terrorist groups?
8. What is the Army's process of categorizing civilian advocacy of constitutionally protected activities?
9. Does the Army consider participating in pro-life advocacy, or abortion-related counseling

(sidewalks and crisis centers) in proximity to military installations to be terrorist activity?

10. Fort Liberty's statement claims that future slides will be reviewed to "ensure they align with the current DoD anti-terrorism guidance." What groups does the current anti-terrorism guidance consider to be terrorist groups or other threats to base security?

The Committee on Armed Services, under Rule X, clause 1 of the Rules of the House of Representatives ("House Rules"), maintains oversight jurisdiction over the Department of Defense generally. Moreover, under the House Rules, the Committee on Armed Services derives its authority to conduct oversight from, among other things, clause 2(b)(1) of Rule X (relating to general oversight responsibilities), clause 3(b) of Rule X (relating to special oversight functions), and clause 1(b) of rule XI (relating to investigations and studies).

Thank you for your attention to this matter. We look forward to your prompt response.



Jim Banks
Chairman
Subcommittee on Military Personnel



Mike Rogers
Chairman
House Armed Services Committee



Richard Hudson
Member
House of Representatives



Joe Wilson
Member
House Armed Services Committee



Mike Turner
Member
House Armed Services Committee



Robert J. Wittman
Member
Armed Services Committee



Austin Scott
Member
House Armed Services Committee



Sam Graves
Member
House Armed Services Committee



Elise Stefanik
Member
House Armed Services Committee



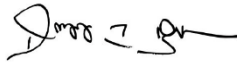
Scott DesJarlais
Member
House Armed Services Committee



Trent Kelly
Member
House Armed Services Committee



Matt Gaetz
Member
House Armed Services Committee



Don Bacon
Member
House Armed Services Committee



Jack Bergman
Member
House Armed Services Committee



Michael Waltz
Member
House Armed Services Committee



Ronny L. Jackson
Member
House Armed Services Committee



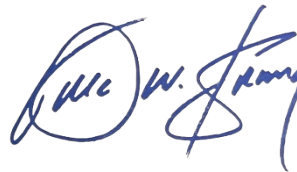
Pat Fallon
Member
House Armed Services Committee



Carlos Gimenez
Member
House Armed Services Committee



Brad Finstad
Member
House Armed Services Committee



Dale W. Strong
Member
House Armed Services Committee



Morgan Luttrell
Member
House Armed Services Committee



Jen Kiggans
Member
House Armed Services Committee



Cory Mills
Member
House Armed Services Committee



Rich McCormick
Member
House Armed Services Committee



Clay Higgins
Member
House Armed Services Committee

cc: The Honorable Adam Smith
Ranking Member
House Armed Services Committee

The Honorable Andy Kim
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Military Personnel