

# RELIGIOUS LIBERTY AMENDMENT OPPOSED



Bill Donohue comments on opposition by the Obama administration to a National Defense Authorization Act amendment that would protect the religious liberty of men and women in the Armed Forces:

If the religious liberty of the Armed Forces were secure, there would be no need for an amendment to safeguard it. Sadly, there is. Rep. John Fleming wants to make sure that the military accommodates religious expression, and for that he should be commended. Importantly, he is not an absolutist: he explicitly allows for exceptions based on “military necessity.”

In a statement released yesterday by the Office of Management and Budget, it said officers need discretion “to address potentially problematic speech and actions within their units.” It also said Fleming’s amendment “would have a significant adverse effect on good order, discipline, morale and mission accomplishment.”

All speech is “potentially problematic,” but that is hardly an argument for curbing it. It is also a red herring to say that by ensuring the First Amendment rights to free speech and religious liberty, it will cause a threat to “good order, discipline and mission accomplishment” in the military. Really? The Obama administration didn’t worry about “good order, discipline and mission accomplishment” when it was touting the virtues of gays serving openly in the military. As for morale, it is being undermined by the censorial environment that religious men and women in uniform have to tolerate.

When it comes to those who elect to mutilate their genitals in transgender surgery, we are told they can't have too many rights. When it comes to suspected Muslim terrorists, we are told they cannot have too many rights. When it comes to pre-teen girls seeking to get birth control pills behind their parents' back, we are told they cannot have too many rights. But when it comes to the religious rights of the Armed Forces, we are told they already have too many rights.