



REPLY TO  
ATTENTION OF

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
U.S. ARMY MANEUVER SUPPORT CENTER OF EXCELLENCE  
320 MANSCEN LOOP STE 316  
FORT LEONARD WOOD, MISSOURI 65473-8929

January 21, 2010

Office of the  
Commanding General

Ms. Ayesha Kahn  
Americans United for Separation of Church and State  
518 C Street, N.E.  
Washington, D.C. 20002

Dear Ms. Kahn:

I have been asked to respond on behalf of Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates to your December 18, 2009 letter concerning the Tabernacle Baptist Church Retreat. We are confident that this program is truly voluntary and legally supportable and that Soldiers who choose not to participate are provided meaningful on-post alternatives.

As you know, the program has been in place since the early 1970s and currently takes place on selected Sunday afternoons between 1:00 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. Several adjustments have been made over the years to ensure that it is truly voluntary and that Soldiers who choose not to participate are offered meaningful substitute activities while remaining at Fort Leonard Wood. We are not aware of a single Soldier complaint in the past few years from either participants or those remaining on post.

Tabernacle Baptist Church provides Soldiers free use of cell phones with a 20-minute limit on phone calls, use of a church-owned bowling alley (Soldiers pay \$5.00 to bowl), and free use of the church gymnasium. Concessions and disposable cameras are provided at low cost to the Soldiers. The church also provides one free evening meal, which is served in "pot luck" fashion.

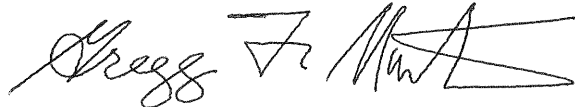
Soldiers from participating units who choose to remain at Fort Leonard Wood enjoy the following on the day of the Tabernacle Retreat:

- Brigade area passes to include the post bowling alley.
- Use of their personal cell phones.
- Ability to order pizza to be delivered to their barracks areas.

All Soldiers in basic training can eat free in post dining facilities and have free use of a gymnasium. Soldiers remaining on post are not scheduled for extra training or required to perform extra duties.

We will continue to monitor and assess this program to ensure that it meets all applicable Constitutional requirements.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gregg F. Martin". The signature is stylized with a large, sweeping "G" and "M".

GREGG F. MARTIN  
Major General, U.S. Army  
Commanding