



Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515-4302

July 8, 2011

The Honorable Jeff Miller
Chairman, House Committee on Veterans' Affairs
335 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:

We are very concerned about recent accusations made against the Director of the Houston National Cemetery. Members of The American Legion Post 586, Veterans of Foreign Wars District 4 and the National Memorial Ladies, a volunteer group that attends funerals of fallen service members, accuse Houston National Cemetery Director Arleen Ocasio of violating their first amendment rights.

In their accusations, as outlined in their amended complaint filed earlier this week, veterans describe how Director Ocasio required them to get their prayers pre-approved, forbid them from using words like "God" or "Jesus," and took the Bibles and the cross out of the chapel before completely closing it.

We ask that your committee look into this important matter. We must ensure that if these accusations are true, that veterans were denied the same first amendment rights they risked their lives for, there are appropriate consequences for those who took such unconscionable actions.

Sincerely,

Ted Poe
Member of Congress

John Culberson
Member of Congress

Michael Conaway
Member of Congress

Pete Olson
Member of Congress

Randy Neugebauer
Member of Congress

Lamar Smith
Member of Congress

Louie Gohmert
Member of Congress

Dennis Ross
Member of Congress

Michael McCaul
Member of Congress

Bill Flores
Member of Congress

Blake Farenthold
Member of Congress

Kenny Marchant
Member of Congress

Ralph Hall
Member of Congress