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Virginia police chaplains resign after restrictions forced them to disregard their own faith

Christian Examiner staff report

RICHMOND, Va. — GOP lawmakers are questioning Virginia Governor Tim Kaine’s role in an aggressive move against Christianity for asking State Police chaplains to stop denominational prayers during department-sanctioned public events.

Six of the Virginia State Police chaplains resigned after Police Superintendent Col. W. Steven Flaherty created, then enforced a strict “non-sectarian” prayer policy at all public gatherings, censoring and excluding Christian prayers.

Flaherty accepted the resignation of the chaplains who refused to deny Jesus or violate their conscience by watering down their prayers.

House Republican Leader Morgan Griffith and Delegate Charles W. Carrico, (R-Grayson) both issued public statements defending the chaplains and vowed to introduce legislation protecting police chaplains’ right to pray according to their own conscience.

Former Navy Chaplain Gordon James Klingenschmitt, who was also fired in 2007 for praying “in Jesus name” in uniform, stated in a press release, “Governor Kaine campaigned like a Christian to get our votes. But now, instead of governing like a Christian, or respecting his own chaplains’ First Amendment rights, his administration forced the resignation of six police chaplains, simply because they prayed publicly ‘in Jesus’ name.”

Klingenschmitt stated that the chaplains lost their jobs for honoring Christ.

Rep. Carrico has launched a website in support of the chaplains. The website is www.injesusnameipray.org

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