

EXCLUSIVE: Active-Duty and Former Service Members Affected by Vax Mandate Continue to Plead for Congress to Lend Them an Ear, Part 1

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Over a month ago, former U.S. Army captain and Special Forces Green Beret John Frankman [sent a letter](#) to Republican House Armed Service Committee (HASC) members, petitioning for a series of hearings to be held to address the unlawfulness of the mandate as well as its effect on force readiness.

A 2022 hearing did little to address the accountability that needs to take place nor the longstanding repercussions to recruiting and retention that are still prevalent today.

In the year prior to the letter, Frankman—on behalf of himself and thousands of other service members—had already called upon various congressmen to hold such hearings.

“This is extremely important because we’re talking about the readiness of our military and our ability to defend ourselves,” he explained.

“Even while tens of thousands of service members were forced out and vaccine injuries were sustained, the national security of our country was not enough to make Congress rush to take advantage of the majority power they have in the House,” Frankman lamented.

As he and other service members continued to be ignored, Frankman took a more direct approach with his letter, admitting “it’s been almost a nonresponse.”

He attributed the silence to the prioritization of investigating the attempted assassination attempt of former president Donald Trump and the removal of Joe Biden from the 2024 election. “It would be understandable with everything going on had it not been three years since the mandate went out,” he shared.

“In this period time, they’ve held hearings on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion,” Frankman pointed out. While both are harmful to the military, in his opinion, he asked, “How many people got kicked out for DEI versus how many were kicked out for the COVID shot?”

“You tell me which one has had the greatest impact to our national security?” Frankman questioned. In recent weeks, it appears some congressmen are receiving his message and may be willing to help. “I’m hopeful and happy to continue to engage with them,” he offered.

Advocating for Service Members

Frankman isn’t alone in his call for congressional action. Take, for example, former senior airman Briana Céspedes, who submitted a religious exemption request to the COVID-19 shot in September 2021.

She was unfairly punished, targeted with threats to her career, and spent more than 140 days in isolation as a result. She now represents and advocates for the thousands of involuntarily separated veterans, hoping senior officials of the Department of Defense will, one day, be held accountable for their actions.

According to her, the fallout from the tyrannical enforcement of the COVID-19 military shot mandate has “affected the entire morale of our military. She noted that “it’s kicked out tens of thousands, and we’re continuing to see low recruitment numbers.”

“Our nation’s security has been affected, so why haven’t we had a hearing in over two years about it?” Céspedes wondered. “Why can’t one single member within HASC call that forward to have specific hearings on this issue?”

“Every member of HASC has been encouraged by email to do this, and some of them were met face to face,” she said. “What we’ve told these congressmen is that we’re at your service, so use us,” she said.

“We have the data, we have the witnesses, and we can assist you, so please give us hearings that are more directed towards military matters.”

Roundtables concerning COVID and Defense Medical Epidemiology Database (DMED) data are not enough, she explained.

“Some congressmen appear to be listening to us, but they’re not calling out anything or anyone in a hearing,” Céspedes said. She praised Rep. Matt Gaetz (R-FL) for being “the only member that’s really been willing to put himself out there and really speak up and not let go of the issue, [but added] we’re ready for more than discussion at this point.”

Regarding Rep. Gaetz, she noted, “he tried to put forward an amendment to the NDAA that would include back pay [for service members separated for refusing the shot].”

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For service members, the effort was a disappointment, because “it didn’t even get through the House Armed Services Committee.”

“Many are saying we’re going to get change with a new president, but isn’t it Congress’s job to ensure the rights of the people even outside of a Republican president?” Céspedes asked.

“We’re being dismissed to wait for the next administration to do something, even though we have a Republican House, and that’s just a terrible disappointment to the thousands involuntarily separated by an unlawful mandate who continue to live with the repercussions of being kicked out.”

Echoing the words of others on the topic, she wants to see someone held accountable. But like the others, she’s been largely ignored.

Controller of Conscience: God or Government

Even the highest court in the federal judiciary has failed to help address the problem. On April 29, the Supreme Court denied a petition by 38 military chaplains to reinstate Alvarado v. Austin.

The case surrounded the blanket denial of religious accommodation requests to the now-rescinded 2021 military shot mandate.

Emphasizing his views don’t reflect those of the Department of Defense or the Department of the Air Force, the Gateway Pundit spoke to retired Army Col. Brad Lewis, one of the chaplains in the case who was “disheartened” by the Supreme Court’s decision to deny.

Lewis said he immediately sent a letter to all members of the HASC and Senate Committee on Armed Services (SASC), as well as the Speaker of the House, the ranking member of the House and both the Majority and Minority leaders in the Senate.

“The purpose of the letter was to voice my concern, as a chaplain in the Army, that the foundational principle of religious freedom in America is under assault and in danger,” Lewis disclosed.

He specifically called for the letter’s recipients to use their “influence and position to advocate for policies that protect religious liberty in the Armed Forces and hold military leadership accountable for punishing servicemembers who chose to follow their conscience.”

Four months later, Lewis has heard nothing, and no one has been held accountable for the mandate’s unlawful implementation and enforcement.

“I was always under the assumption that the men and women who were elected to Congress were there to represent ‘We the People’ and were desirous of hearing from their constituents, in this case an active member of the Armed Services, but I have been proven wrong,” lamented Lewis. “To say I’m disappointed would be an understatement.”

Will Congress hear their plea?