



Written by [Michael Tennant](#) on March 11, 2019

Elderly Woman Threatened With Eviction From Veterans' Home for Leading Bible Studies

The state of California is threatening to evict an elderly widow from a veterans' home for the offense of leading Bible studies, but attorneys from the Pacific Justice Institute (PJI) are fighting back on the woman's behalf.

Artis Breau, 84, moved into the California Veterans Home in Yountville about nine years ago, along with her late husband. Both were eminently qualified to live there.

According to a [PJI press release](#), "Her husband had served as a Merchant Marine in World War II, served in the famed 82nd Airborne Division overseas, and then served in the Air Force during the Korean War. Meanwhile, Artis worked as a civilian employee in the Office of the Chief of Staff of the Army at the Pentagon during the Korean War."



For most of her time living at the home, Breau has volunteered with the chaplaincy program and has also led Bible studies, at which attendance is voluntary. Until last year, none of this had been a problem for home administrators.

However, beginning in September, Breau began to encounter opposition. At that time, wrote PJI, "it was claimed that a discussion between herself and another resident about heaven and hell had allegedly caused him to lose sleep and therefore was elder abuse, emotional abuse, and otherwise illegal." (Under these terms, every successful evangelist in history ought to have been charged with abuse.)

Breau nevertheless continued with her Bible studies. Then, in mid-December, the home notified her that her volunteer status was being suspended while the charges against her were investigated.

PJI, a nonprofit legal-defense organization specializing in the defense of religious freedom, says Breau has yet to be interviewed about the alleged complaint against her. Thus, her volunteer status remains suspended, though until recently, she has been able to continue leading Bible studies for some of the home's oldest and least-mobile residents, many of whom cannot attend chapel services.

On March 1, an attorney for the California Department of Veterans Affairs (CalVet) informed PJI that Breau's "Bible studies were in violation of prior directives and would subject her to 'involuntary discharge' from the Home if they continued," reported PJI.

The home claims it needs to protect residents from Breau, but she believes her status as a Jew who believes in Jesus — just like the first Christians — to be the real flashpoint because some of the



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chaplains do not take kindly to it.

PJI says it “sent a strongly-worded response to” CalVet “and is weighing all legal options.”

“CalVet’s treatment of this widow is shameful,” said PJI attorney Matthew McReynolds, who represents Breau. “Throughout this process, we have been deeply disturbed not only by the lack of constitutional guidelines, ineptitude, and lack of due process in the investigation, but even more by the notion that discussing religious views on the eternal state of the soul is somehow elder abuse or emotional abuse. Our client’s husband fought for his country to preserve the freedoms now being threatened by CalVet. Our veterans deserve better.”

Contacted about the case by [Breitbart News](#), CalVet Deputy Secretary for Women Veterans Lindsey Sin released a statement saying: “The safety, security, and wellbeing of all of our residents is our top priority. We are very proud of the religious services provided to all of our residents through our chaplaincy services. This investigation concerns the private conduct of an individual. Beyond that, we are unable to comment on an ongoing investigation.”

PJI president Brad Dacus, on the other hand, put it this way: “This shocking attack from the State against our client’s exercise of religious convictions is deeply disturbing. The State seeks to punish Artis based on non-existent directives, and deprive her of a personal ministry to the veterans who have benefited from her religious services for years. Artis isn’t fighting just for herself, but for the Gospel and for the residents who are unable to fight for themselves against the State’s attempted intimidation.”

Here’s hoping she wins.



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