



The US air force has told an atheist airman he must swear his re-enlistment oath to God or he will not be allowed to reenlist, according to the American Humanist.

The airman, who is stationed at Creech Air Force Base in Nevada, has not been identified. The service said he has until November to swear the oath required of all servicemembers, which concludes with the phrase “so help me God.”

The American Humanist Association said in a letter to the air force (pdf) last week that the officer was told that he either had to say the phrase or leave the service. The airman has previously crossed out the phrase in a written contract and refused to say it out loud, and was told August 25 that the contract would therefore not be accepted for re-enlistment.

The group believes the oath as currently required is a violation of the airman’s constitutional rights under the First Amendment and demanded that he be allowed to re-enlist without using “so help me God.”

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