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UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
WESTERN DISTRICT OF WASHINGTON
AT TACOMA

MAJOR MARGARET WITT,

Plaintiff,

vs.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF
THE AIR FORCE; et al.,

Defendants.

NO. 06-5195 RBL

DECLARATION OF MAJOR VINCE
ODA

I, Major Vince Oda, do hereby declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the United States of America, that the following facts are true and correct:

1. I am over the age of 18 years, have personal knowledge of the facts contained in this Declaration and am competent to testify to them.

2. I am a Major in the United States Air Force. I have known Major Margaret Witt for approximately 6 years. I first met Major Witt when she joined the 446th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron ("446th").

DECLARATION OF MAJOR
VINCE ODA - 1

WY004 plds hd104202 4/10/06

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1 3. I joined the Air Force as a reservist right out of nursing school in 1989. I
2 was initially stationed at McChord Air Force Base in 1994, and then I was transferred to
3 March Air Force Base in California. I was transferred back to McChord in 1996 and
4 there I met Major Witt for the first time. I am a Flight Nurse. Approximately two months
5 ago I was also made Chief of StanEval for the 446th. My duties include instructing and
6 evaluating all nurses within the 446th.

7 4. In the performance of my duties, I worked regularly work with Major Witt.
8 She was my supervisor when she was in charge of physical fitness. In my opinion she is a
9 very fine flight nurse and a very good supervisor.

10 5. I have always known Major Witt to be highly professional, skilled and
11 disciplined. I have the utmost trust and confidence in her abilities as a member of the
12 U.S. Air Force and am honored to serve with her as a member of the 446th AES. I believe
13 my opinion of her is shared by the other members of the unit. Major Witt is a highly
14 valuable, well-liked and well-respected member of the 446th.

15 6. Based on my personal observations of Major Witt I can say with
16 confidence that her presence in the Air Force greatly enhances her Unit's combat
17 efficiency and readiness.

18 7. I have routinely witnessed Major Witt interact with her superiors,
19 subordinates and peers. I believe that Major Witt sustains strong working relationships
20 with and has the respect of all of the members of our Unit, regardless of rank. In my
21 experience, Major Witt performs her supervisory duties successfully and professionally.

DECLARATION OF MAJOR
VINCE ODA - 2

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1 Major Witt's strong relationships help maintain an effective chain of command in our
2 Unit.

3 8. About five months after Major Witt stopped participating in duty at
4 McChord Air Force Base, I attended a convention of the Association of Operating Nurses
5 in New Orleans, Louisiana. While I was there, I went by the booth of an Air Force
6 Reserve recruiter. I saw the recruiter was using a recruitment poster with Major Witt's
7 photo on it. I thought it was pretty strange that at the same time the Air Force was
8 processing Major Witt for an administrative discharge, they were still using her photo in
9 their recruitment posters.

10 9. I do not believe that Major Witt's presence in the U.S. Air Force or,
11 specifically, in our Unit would jeopardize recruiting efforts. On the contrary, I believe
12 that Major Witt was selected to appear on various U.S. Air Force recruiting posters,
13 brochures and other materials because she exemplifies the qualities that the U.S. Air
14 Force seeks in recruits. I also personally believe that Major Witt exemplifies the qualities
15 that makes one a good and valuable member of the U.S. Air Force.

16 10. In all the time that I have known Major Witt and served with her, I have
17 never seen or heard of anyone in the armed forces expressing any problem with her. I
18 have never heard anyone complain about her. I have never heard anyone say that they
19 wished she was not a member of their unit. I have never heard of any incident where she
20 caused a discipline or morale problem.
21

DECLARATION OF MAJOR
VINCE ODA - 3

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1 11. The 446th was never given any official explanation as to why Major Witt
2 was no longer reporting for reserve duty. We were simply told "Major Witt will no
3 longer be with us." Unofficially I heard through the rumor mill that she was being
4 separated from the service because she was a lesbian.

5 12. Major Witt never discussed her sexuality with me. She never told me that
6 she was a lesbian, and I never asked. I didn't care. I have long assumed that she is a
7 lesbian. Assuming that she is a lesbian, I can say without reservation that this fact makes
8 absolutely no difference to me. Furthermore, in my opinion it makes no difference to
9 anyone else in the 446th either. In my opinion, if command were to announce that she was
10 lesbian and that she was remaining in the service, her continued presence in the Air Force
11 would not have any negative impact upon her unit morale, discipline, or combat
12 readiness, and no negative impact whatsoever upon me. It would still be my strong desire
13 to have her remain in the service and to continue to work with her.

14 13. I believe that the removal of Major Witt from the 446th has had a negative
15 effect on unit morale. Everyone in the unit that I have talked to about it believes that it is
16 grossly unfair, and hopes that she will be allowed to return to the unit as soon as possible.

17 14. Not only is it grossly unfair to her, it is also harmful to the Air Force and
18 the public in general. We currently have huge shortage of qualified flight nurses in the
19 Air Force. It makes no sense for the Air Force to discharge Major Witt, one of the very
20 best flight nurses the Air Force has, at a time when the Air Force desperately needs
21 qualified flight nurses.

DECLARATION OF MAJOR
VINCE ODA -4

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15. In sum, I firmly believe that discharging Major Witt from the U.S. Air Force would be detrimental. Moreover, I believe that our Unit's morale, cohesion and good order would be severely jeopardized if Major Witt is discharged.

DATED this 10 day of April, 2006.



Vincent Oda, Major, United States Air Force Reserve

DECLARATION OF MAJOR
VINCE ODA - 5

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