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Press Release

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CATHOLIC VETERANS SUPPORT THE MOJAVE DESERT VETERANS MEMORIAL

ALEXANDRIA, VA: Today, the Catholic War Veterans of the United States offer our unwavering support of the legal efforts to defend the veterans memorial site known as the "Mojave Desert Veterans Memorial" in California.

The memorial monument in question was erected in 1934 by United States military veterans of World War I to honor and remember their fallen comrades, and for all veterans who have given their life in war. In keeping with long standing historical tradition, the veterans chose to erect a simple white cross as the centerpiece for their memorial atop the rocks where they saw a distinct discoloration representing a WWI "Doughboy" figure.

Since its erection by members of the local Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Post in 1934, and until 1984, it was cared for by one of the original participants of the memorial's erection. In

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1984, and upon his specific request prior to his death, the care of the memorial was transferred to his close friend, a private non-veteran citizen of the area. To date, this citizen has held it as an honor to continue to care for the memorial.

In 1999, the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) acted to have the memorial removed without success. In 2001 and on behalf of Mr. Frank Buono (who is described in the court record as a practicing Roman Catholic) the ACLU filed a federal lawsuit to force the memorial to be removed.

Since that time the case has been appealed and is now slated to be addressed by the Supreme Court later this year. The decision of the Supreme Court will decide the ultimate fate of the memorial.

As Roman Catholics and Military Veterans of this nation, we strongly urge the Supreme Court to reverse the decision of the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals in this case, and to protect for the benefit of future generations this veterans memorial as it was originally erected in 1934. We further call upon all citizens to assist in the legal defense efforts by spreading the word about this case and signing the petition located at the website: www.donttearmedown.com. The website is the product of Liberty Legal Institute of Plano, Texas, who is generously providing legal defense resources before the courts.

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Founded in 1935, the Catholic War Veterans of the United States of America, Inc. is the preeminent national veterans service organization representing the Catholic military veterans of our nation. The CWV is the only Catholic organization to have been granted an official charter by the U.S. Congress. The CWV is a private, non-profit organization recognized by the Internal Revenue Service under IRC 501(c)4.