

**Congressman**

Representing Arizona's



**Trent Franks**

2nd Congressional District

For Immediate Release

Contact: Bethany Haley or Ben Carnes at 202-225-4576

## **Congressman Franks Responds to Pentagon's Decision to Rescind Franklin Graham Speaking Invitation**

April 23, 2010 - Congressman Trent Franks (AZ-02) today released the following statement in response to reports that the Army has rescinded its invitation to evangelist Franklin Graham for the upcoming National Day of Prayer at the Pentagon:

**"The Pentagon's decision is an outrageous affront to the ideals of freedom of religion and expression that are the essence of America, that are reflected throughout America's history including in our Declaration of Independence, and that Franklin Graham's own son is risking his life in Afghanistan on his fourth tour of duty to protect.**

**"Franklin has a longstanding history of serving and advocating for America's noble men and women in Armed Services, and as CEO of Samaritan's Purse, he has given his life to ministering to the 'least of these' in over 100 countries throughout the world. His life is one that truly embodies the selflessness, patriotism, and sacrifice that are inherent to the United States military. To dismiss him for these overtly political reasons is a shame and a disgrace that is obviously being done to placate a few outspoken critics, at the expense of disenfranchising the many, many more supporters of Graham who know that he truly loves and supports our valiant men and women in the armed forces.**

**"This ridiculous decision shows the lengths to which some will go to stifle religious freedom in the name of tolerance. The essence of tolerance is not that we all must agree with one another, but that each of us respects and values one another *in spite* of our disagreements.**

**"I hope that the Pentagon will reconsider this decision, and that Franklin Graham will once again be allowed to address our military men and women on the National Day of Prayer as he has in the past."**

*Congressman Franks is serving his fourth term in the U.S. House of Representatives, and is a member of the Committee on Armed Services, Strategic Forces Subcommittee, Oversight & Investigations Subcommittee, Military Readiness Subcommittee, Committee on the Judiciary, Constitution Subcommittee, and is Ranking Member on the Subcommittee on Commercial and Administrative Law.*