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IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Life of Service Stalled by Discrimination

Washington, DC – Michael Nutt who served the United States for more than thirty years as a paramedic and physician’s assistant assigned as part of the National Disaster Medical System, filed suit today against the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) for employment discrimination based on disability. The suit alleges that HHS unlawfully terminated Nutt from service solely due to his type 2 diabetes in violation of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

As a member of emergency response teams, Nutt deployed during disasters including hurricanes and National Security Special Events such as the 2017 Presidential Inauguration. Although Nutt has type 2 diabetes, he successfully deployed and served multiple times without incident. In 2017, NDMS adopted a policy which contains a blanket prohibition on service by any individual with diabetes who uses insulin. Although Nutt’s physicians agree that he effectively manages his diabetes and remains fit to serve, NDMS placed him on nondeployment status and proposed his removal from service. HHS then terminated Nutt from service solely due to his diabetes.

Nutt who is also a pilot and competitive sailor said, “The highlight of my life has been serving people in their darkest moments.” He added, “It is devastating after thirty years of service that the United States won’t let me use my skills to help others because of misconceptions about diabetes.”

Nutt is represented by Stein & Vargas, LLP.

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Stein & Vargas, LLP is a civil rights firm based in Washington, D.C. and committed to the principle that all people have full and equal access to all parts of society.

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