

EXHIBIT 1

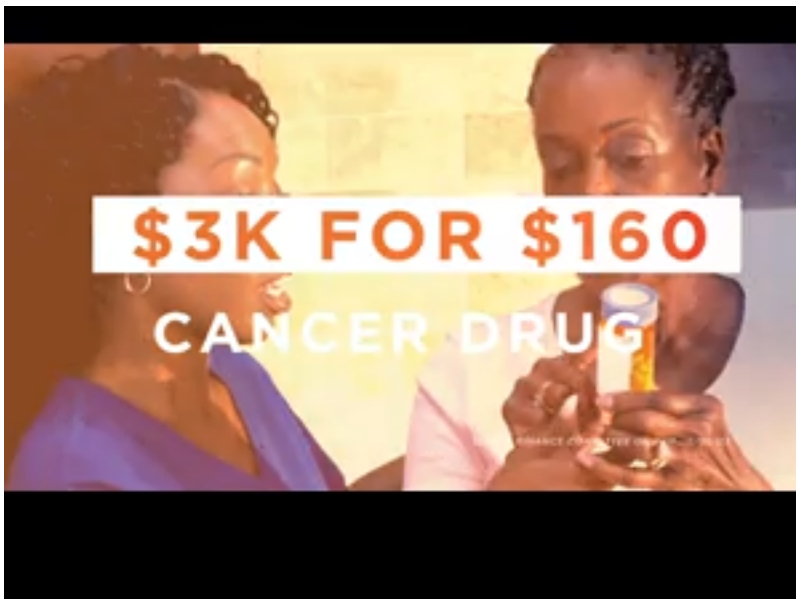
DEFENSE

Rubio presses military to reschedule canceled showings of ‘Sound of Freedom’

BY ELLEN MITCHELL - 09/13/23 3:33 PM ET

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Sen. [Marco Rubio](#) (R-Fla.) is pressing U.S. Southern Command (SOUTHCOM) to reschedule “without delay” two canceled showings of the Christian thriller “Sound of Freedom,” according to a new letter obtained by The Hill.

In the letter, sent Wednesday to SOUTHCOM Commander Gen. [Laura Richardson](#), Rubio writes that he was “alarmed” to learn of the decision to cancel the film’s screenings at the command’s headquarters in Doral, Fla.

But the command scrapped the showings last month, citing concerns over copyright infringement.

The film, which has grossed more than \$185 million since its July 4 release, has also been the subject of much scrutiny after its lead actor, Jim Caviezel, publicly linked the movie's anti-exploitation plotline to baseless QAnon theories.

Rubio contends that the impediments that prevented SOUTHCOM from screening the movie, in particular the fear of copyright infringement, are no longer of issue as "the producers and distributors of 'Sound of Freedom' have consented" to such a showing.

He also said he has learned that Angel Studios, which released the film, offered to send a representative to meet with command personnel and their families after the screenings to answer any questions.

"Since the concern which led to the cancellation has now been addressed, I urge you to rectify this situation and ensure that the screenings of the film be rescheduled without delay," Rubio writes.

SOUTHCOM did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

The "Sound of Freedom" is based on the work of Timothy Ballard, a controversial anti-trafficking activist who started the anti-child exploitation group known as Operation Underground Railroad.

Multiple outlets have reported that the group's missions are difficult to verify and not fully honest in what they've achieved.

U.S. Army Garrison-Miami initially chose to hold the screenings "after concluding it could help raise awareness of human rights issues closely associated with the nefarious activities of transnational criminal organizations (TCO) operating in Central America, South America and the Caribbean, where SOUTHCOM closely partners with Host Nations to counter the threat posed by those violent criminal groups to our hemisphere and its citizens," according to Army Col. Emanuel Ortiz.

SOUTHCOM later canceled the events after a review of "applicable laws and regulations governing the use of materials subject to copyright and intellectual property laws for official or recreational purposes," noting that the film was widely available to see elsewhere.

Rubio presses that a screening is valuable to the command and hints at a double standard, given that the Defense Department (DOD) regularly works with film studios to host viewings of movies on U.S. military installations.

their families,” Rubio writes.

TAGS LAURA RICHARDSON MARCO RUBIO MARCO RUBIO SOUND OF FREEDOM US SOUTHERN COMMAND

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