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To:

U.S. Department of State

Bureau of Consular Affairs

CC: Office of the Inspector General, U.S. Embassy Lomé, Office of the Legal Adviser, Department of Defense Liaison, Office of Veterans Affairs International Programs

Date: August 4, 2025

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to formally request immediate access to the full contents of the file maintained by the U.S. Embassy in Lomé, Togo, concerning U.S. Army veteran **Kelvin Blas**.

It has come to my attention through an intermediary (Kingsley, a local legal advocate in Togo) that this file includes damaging remarks made by a former commanding officer, **Michael Burleson**, who was reportedly contacted by the embassy after being identified by Kelvin himself. According to the account relayed, Burleson characterized Kelvin's presence in Togo as the result of "chasing wealth," and his statement appears to have heavily influenced the Embassy's posture toward assisting Mr. Blas.

This communication—if indeed part of the official file—raises serious concerns about how unsupported hearsay may have contributed to the prolonged abandonment of a U.S. veteran who has repeatedly sought embassy protection and repatriation.

Given the high-stakes nature of this situation, and the fact that Mr. Blas has endured homelessness, hunger, illness, and ongoing threats while stranded in Togo, I am demanding the following under the appropriate provisions of the **Privacy Act of 1974 (5 U.S.C. § 552a)** and all applicable oversight regulations:

1. **A complete copy or detailed written inventory of the embassy's file related to Kelvin Blas**, including but not limited to:
 - Any and all email correspondence referencing Kelvin or his case
 - Communications to or from Michael Burleson or any other military official
 - Internal memos or determinations affecting his eligibility for consular support
 - Any notations regarding his passport status and the embassy's decisions on assistance
2. **An explanation of how unverified personal commentary—if present—was allowed to override or influence consular action** on a stranded U.S. citizen and Army veteran.
3. **Clarification of current consular policy regarding repatriation or aid to veterans abroad** without possession of a physical passport, and any appeal processes for waiver or exception.

This is a matter of national interest and human dignity. I expect a timely and transparent response. I am also sharing this inquiry with press, legal, and advocacy entities due to the severe implications of neglect and mischaracterization in Kelvin's case.

Should I not receive a response within 7 days of receipt of this request, I will escalate through congressional offices, veterans' rights organizations, and legal counsel.

David Burger

Public Defense Unit | Guardian Legal Watch

Email: 