

April 25, 2014

Response System to Adult Sexual Assault Crimes Panel

One Liberty Center

875 N. Randolph Street, Suite 150

Arlington, VA 22203

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

I am writing to you to urge you to support current legislation to end the human rights violations of military sexual assault and sexual trauma. Representative Niki Tsongas from Massachusetts recently introduced the Military Act of 2014 (FAIR Military Act). Please support it and end this tragic chapter in our military history.

I am a 30-year Army Veteran. Please take a moment to read my story about sexual assault when I deployed to Iraq in 2008 and served as Camp Sheriff of Camp East Liberty in Baghdad, Iraq. The recent non-prosecution and unprecedented reduced military justice sentence of accused sex offender General Sinclair speaks volumes to a problem I know first-hand is undermining the effectiveness of our military forces and is violating the rights of the victims to receive rapid trauma interventions following an incident of sexual assault.

Please seek justice and treatment for the victims of military sexual assault. This is America. We cannot continue to ignore the rights of those who protect us during such vulnerable times following sexual assault and sexual trauma.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at [REDACTED]

Respectfully,

Betzaida (Betsy) Rodriguez

Retired Army Sergeant Major

[REDACTED]

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Tsongas, Turner unveil new military sexual assault legislation

April 10, 2014

Today, Congresswoman Niki Tsongas (D-MA) and Congressman Mike Turner (R-OH), co-chairs of the Military Sexual Assault Prevention Caucus, introduced new legislation to combat military sexual assault.

The Furthering Accountability and Individual Rights within the Military Act of 2014 (FAIR Military Act) supports survivors, eliminates a bias in the military justice system and increases accountability among all levels of the military.

The FAIR Military Act

- Limits the use of the “good soldier” defense, which allows a defendant to cite unrelated, subjective factors during trial, such as military record;
- Requires that commanders be assessed on their ability to create a climate where a victim can report a crime without fear of retaliation;
- Requires that commanders and servicemembers be assessed on their support of sexual assault prevention and response policies;
- Ensures that the changes and provisions regarding military sexual assault prevention from the FY14 Defense Authorization apply to the military service academies;
- Requires the Government Accountability Office to issue a report on the implementation of sexual assault prevention policies put in place by Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel as well as the sexual assault prevention provisions put in place by the FY13 and FY14 Defense Authorizations;
- Ensures that an independent panel will look at how the mental health records of victims are admitted into evidence at trial and whether changes should be made to the military rules of evidence.

“Accountability begins at the top and must extend across the military, to every rank and position. This legislation ensures our military leaders, servicemembers and the military justice system, are held to the highest standard,” said **Congresswoman Tsongas**. “And no more will the ‘good soldier’ defense run interference for criminal behavior and prevent the finder of fact from arriving at justice. Military sexual assault is a multifaceted challenge that requires continued, meaningful reforms. The FAIR Military Act is another step towards eradicating these crimes and changing the toxic culture that has allowed them to continue for too long.”

“In 2007, the military did not recognize sexual assault as a crime, said **Congressman Turner**. “Since that time, Congresswoman Tsongas and I have diligently worked to pass reforms that change this deep-rooted and flawed culture. The FAIR Military Act is another powerful step toward the elimination of sexual assault in the military. This legislation confronts failures in our current system and takes specific action in the areas of prevention, protection, and prosecution.”

The Service Women’s Action Network voiced support for the FAIR Military Act. “Today, Representatives Michael Turner and Niki Tsongas introduced the FAIR Military Act because sexual harassment and assault do not belong in the workplace or our military,” said **SWAN policy director and former Marine Greg Jacob**. “This legislation creates documented, professional repercussions for officers and enlisted members who create toxic climates in which these crimes are tacitly accepted and prevents those that commit these crimes from allowing facts such as their ‘general military character’ to let them off the hook.”

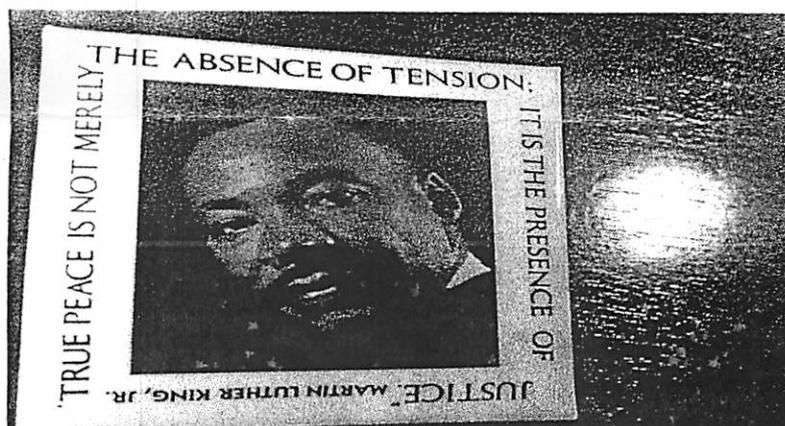
Several of the provisions in the FAIR Military Act passed the Senate 97-0 as part of a bill authored by Senator Claire McCaskill (D-MO) and Senator Kelly Ayotte (R-NH).

Betzaida Rodriguez

March 24, 2014

The Patriots Movement

The Story Behind the Movement



I would like to share a story with you. This story is not about me. For those who read it, please do not glorify me or make me the center of the story, but hear the voice of my despair and the justice I intent to seek with the sharing of this story.

I deployed to Iraq in 2008, during the surge of troops. As a Sheriff of a large camp, the demands of my job were very high. But I found a sense of purpose and pride in serving the needs of my soldiers and the Army during such demanding times of war. I even found joy in the accomplishment of my tasks and missions. The busier I was, the less I missed my family back home and the more I accomplished for my camp. I was proud of my service, my camp, and the institution I later left abruptly with dissent but no regrets.

Something horrible happened to me during the last month of my deployment. One day, my operations sergeant informed me that I was finally going to enjoy the company of another female sergeant major and share my Wet (shower inside the unit) Containerized Housing Unit (CHU)-a double trailer with her. I was very excited about getting a roommate. During my entire deployment, I found myself walking the pads (paths) alone without a "battle body." Because I was a senior enlisted woman, the possibility of sharing my CHU with a lower ranking enlisted female soldier was prohibited by the CENTCOM Sanbook Housing standards and by traditional Army policies of fraternization with lower ranking enlisted personnel.

Three days had passed, and I saw no evidence of anyone living next to me. I decided to knock on the side of my new roommate's door and introduce myself briefly. Behind that door, I saw the image

that has hunted me ever since. This event changed my life and the fate of my career. For it was on that day that I came face-to-face with the pain and sorrows of a broken warrior's spirit and the failures of a system that at the time was just incompetent, and now, with Sinclair's acquittal, clearly unjust!

Command Sergeant Major Maria Assaulted (fictitious name) was the victim of sexual assault perpetrated against her by three of her subordinate male soldiers. No one told me about Maria's story or why she was there in my camp. She just showed up like any other piece of mail, equipment, or object that was delivered to my camp, with the exemption that she did not bring a "shipping slip" describing her identity or her purpose, which was usually the case with pieces of equipment or materials delivered to the camp. When I asked about her purpose in my camp, my Operations NCO said; "I don't know Sergeant Major, but I was told by the Sergeant Major, who escorted her at check in, that she was undergoing trial and was under a gag order." Immediately, the cause of Maria's darkness around her eyes and the pain that she projected became clear to me.

I spent the last few days of my deployment witnessing Maria's struggles as a victim of sexual assault. She was lonely and isolated. No therapist, no supports, just complete isolation in order to serve the needs of the Army's defense counsels. Institutional re-traumatization at its best! I knew it. And all that I could do for Maria back then was to bring her a daily plate of food, crack a few jokes, and occasionally persuade her to go out with me to get our nails done at Camp Slayer—a beautiful camp where Saddam Hussein's sons played with the many women they brought to their perfume palaces. Maria's smiles were very few, but I got some out of her. I also got her to eat little bites of food here and there, which I diligently make sure I brought to her daily. I held Maria in my arms many times and allowed her to cry on my shoulders. And although I did not shed a tear at the time, I could feel the pain and sorrow of my sister warrior like a sharp knife, which sometimes I wished it was real and it could end the pain for her and I, right there and then!

Three years later, I realized that my struggles with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) stemmed from the images of Maria and the connections that those images had with my own past childhood traumas of sexual abuse and neglect. I carried the trauma from my past experiences inside a Pandora Box. Maria didn't know it, but she unintentionally opened my Pandora Box, which in turn unleashed a series of other reactions I then didn't have to vocabulary to convey.

Maria's images got stuck in my brain. I saw Maria in my dreams. Nightmares of assault and violence against both of us haunted me. In my dreams, I wanted to save Maria But I could not. I was held back by a force invisible and stronger than myself—a force that impeded me from taking my pistol out of my holster to defend Maria from her assailants. In my dreams and nightmares, I hopelessly watched as her small body disintegrated in a pile of blood right in front of my eyes—but I was unable to move by the unknown force that held me back. I woke at night screaming, in cold sweats, with the fear that somehow, the assailants will open my front door and degrade me with assaults against my body.

Today I declare myself free from the forces that have stopped me from talking about Maria, her pain, and her injustice! Today, I can see and name the invisible force that has held me back in my dreams. Its

name is **greed, power and corruption**. And now that I have found the source of my fears, inaction and inertia, I declare myself free from it all!

Today I call on General Darpino to reflect on her position as the Army Judge Advocate, her actions or inactions, and the real place she wants in history for herself. General Darpino, are you going to be used as an instrument to perpetuate a system of corruption and oppression that denies justice to the men and women who sacrifice their families and their personal safety to serve in the ranks of your institutions? Perhaps, if you took a minute of your busy time, picked up the phone tonight and had a heart to heart conversation with another "Poster Girl," <http://www.postergirlthemovie.com/>, you will gain great insight as to why I call on your immediate resignation, without regret or hesitation. Resign, general, resign! For it is not the star that you hold in your uniform that is important and gives you power, but the light that it brings to the troops in times of darkness. General Darpino, let your star shine and be the beacon of light in this dark day of injustice. Resist the temptation and don't allow your star to be tainted by an institution that has lost its moral compass and entices you with promises of promotions and maybe a promise of another career after your military service with "hookups" with another ineffective defense contractor that will bring the next great innovation to the Army---a few years later that is, after its technology has lost real battlefield application. Hey, if you are lucky enough and continue your great job in the Army and loyalty to your institution, they may even reward you further and keep you in the Army as a consultant while you are also employed by the contractor. This will make your job so much easier! What a country! Only in America! But you see, General Darpino, the troops are watching and they are taking notes. Some have become cynical and have learned from the behaviors of their leaders. Instead of fighting against the system, hey, why not just go with the flow and join the club of self-servicing motives and big money to be made. After all, that is the behavior they have learned from many of the leaders they have served under during their long years of service. And while morale is low among the troops; soldiers are committing suicide; things are a real mess--the discussions on the hallways at the Sergeants Majors Academy are more centered in next promotion policy coming out or the next civilians' career move after military service. No one talks about the issues because that is officer's business. And since what they see from many of the officers is the "hookup" behavior, they become masters of the "hookup,"—leaders to none. They pass by the institution like shooting stars, making very short impressions, because the star on their chest is tainted and got lost with the fallen trajectory of fallen ethical and moral values. Very few of them make real impressions in their institution, but we will never know or hear of them because their stars too ended up lost in the fallen trajectory of non-selection for higher positions. Their real job was with the troops, and because they didn't have time to promote themselves or time to make their next "hookup," they are no longer part of the institution. I will give you the benefit of doubt, General Darpino. You are different and your moral courage is intact! Resign, general, resign!

Today, I call on all my brothers and sisters soldiers to remain focused on their missions. Because today, more than ever before, our American citizens need you to continue with your mission and defend our inherent values and the freedoms we all enjoy through the personal sacrifices of your service. Do not get distracted and lose focus! The institution you were sworn in to serve has violated the sanctity of the pact that you both made when you first signed in—it failed in its duty to provide you a sense of safety

(from corruption) and justice at all times. But you, my beloved soldiers, you serve a nation higher than your institution! You see, the institution serves the nation, and it is the nation and its values the ultimate master of your service. Rest assured that the nation that you serve is a just nation and will not allow you to suffer in isolation. For the nation that you serve is a strong nation because it recognizes that it also serves a higher power. Stay put Soldiers, stay focus, be strong—justice is coming soon to a unit near you!

Lastly, I call on all my brothers and sisters' veterans, their families, and any citizen that still believes that the promise of justice is still possible in America and across its institutions, to join me in a peaceful revolt at the Boston Commons Park on July 4, 2014. <http://www.celebrateboston.com/boston-common.htm>

You need to join me with a sense of urgency because your daughters and sons are losing hope and rendering their suffering to suicide. <http://www.cnn.com/2013/09/21/us/22-veteran-suicides-a-day/index.html>. A warrior will fight with a broken heart until the end, but not with a broken spirit cracked by an injustice! Fight for those who fight for you now!!! Join me on our **Day of Freedom for The Forces**, July 4, 2014!

I will keep you posted on the development of this event on my social network at: www.linkedin.com/pub/betzaida-rodriquez/2a/76/250

3-27-2014

By: Betzaida Rodriguez

Replacing superficial religious Ideology that divide the people of faith of the United States, by adopting universal healing and enlightened concepts of faith based in love, justice and the freedom of the spirit, centered in the message of Christ and other spiritual leaders like Mohamed & Moses.

“Jesus didn’t come so you that you could have a religion; Jesus came here so that you can have an intimate relationship with the father through him.” --Joyce Meyer, Global Evangelical Minister

The problem in America is not the use of “God” in our public places and institutions. The problem in America is that the name of God is being used in vain. This constitutes blasphemes—the only unforgiven sin in biblical context (Mark 3:22-30). The word sin in Hebrew is [*chattath*], from the root [*chatta*], and in Greek it is [*hamartia*]. Both these words mean *'to miss the mark.'* My fellow American, I regret to inform you, with great sorrow in my heart, that we ALL have missed the mark of citizenship by adopting polarizing discord over a name and not the meaning of it. We have offended God and continue to offend each other with debates rooted in ideology and not justice.

The problem in America is not religion or secularity. The problem in America is that our leaders in the government and military institutions have lost their moral compass. They use the sacred institutions of public service and military service—institutions historically reserved for gifted servants, to promote their self-servicing ideas and purposes, disregarding their first duty of fostering a society rooted in justice and freedom for all. *“Beware of the false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravenous wolves. You will know them by their fruits (Matthew 7:16).”*

Healing in American society, as well as in our military forces, cannot begin until we recognize our shortcomings and embrace a new vision to restore our moral compasses and to mend our past mistakes.

We could do this in many little ways. Here, I humbly offer my suggestions;

1. Restore order and discipline in our military by holding its leaders accountable. This is the duty of the Commander in Chief. President Obama, I know you've been busy with the American Health Care Act (ACA), but I suggest to you that this matter is of urgent importance. I respectfully ask you to address it, soon that is, before the injustice of General Sinclair's reduced military justice system sentence is forgotten and the repercussions of negated justice to the victim of sexual assault in the military takes its roots and destroys the morale and discipline of our brothers and sisters in uniform. The reason why we have a civilian Commander in Chief is to ensure that tyranny doesn't over power us. Mr. President, please hurry up! The troops are eagerly waiting to salute you and pay you their respect in appreciation for your moral courage in exercising your authority in the form of justice to end the tyranny and misuse of power of its leaders.
2. Congress/Senate: End the pain and suffering of our service men and women by creating a new policy that allows victims of sexual assault to bring their cases and complaints into a well-defined justice system outside of the military justice system.
3. New military policy: Upon military sexual assault, remove the victim from the military system immediately, and provide rapid trauma interventions for healing and restoration. The appropriate intervention should be client-based, client-driven, not a rehearsed drill by an incompetent provider. Institutional re-traumatization is happening. It is costing us a lot of money, but the suffering of the victims is of greater concern, and the price of restoring a warrior's spirit is invaluable. It has no price in terms of dollars! Do what is RIGHT, when is RIGHT, for what is RIGHT!
4. Congress/Senate: Change the "Pledge of Alliance" and bring God into the equation by adding the word "love" and removing the word "God" from it. For God is love and we are all a whole bunch of blasphemous sinners when we use his sacred name in vain. For it is not what we recite like another memorized drill what matters, but the substance and integrity behind the words we pronounce that is important. I ask my brothers and sisters on the right to reflect on what this pledge really means to all of us as citizens of the Great Nation. The Pledge of Alliance has not been with us as a nation all the time. It even has changed over time. The Pledge of Alliance was born in 1892. Its original version said; *"I pledge allegiance to my Flag and to the Republic for which it stands one Nation indivisible, with Liberty and Justice for all."* We are a nation of faith. And because we are a nation of faith, someone way back thought, rightfully so, that

adding the word God was a great idea, not realizing back then that using God's name out of context is an act of blasphemy and the cause of our contemporary division and discord. Replacing the name for what he/she/it really is and means: LOVE, brings accord among our citizens and unites us all for the common cause of justice and freedom for all.

Lastly, join me for a meeting of the minds to bring relief to the pain and suffering of the victims of military sexual assault and sexual trauma. Join me at the Boston Common, on our *Day of Freedom for The Forces*, July 4, 2014!

Corroding Ethical & Moral Values of military leaders (Greed & Power) - Denial of Justice to Victims of Military Sexual Assault/Trauma

Restore moral authority



Allow the healing to begin

***Peace cannot be achieved in a society that denies justice to the defenders of its FREEDOMS!
Our Soldiers will continue to surrender their suffering to suicide and our enemies will attack us!
Restore the trust by doing the walk! Stop the talk! Do the Walk! Mr. Obama, it is time to "police call" the corrupted military leaders at the top so that the heroes can perform their military duties.***

Day of Freedom for The Forces

July 4, 2014 –Boston Common Park

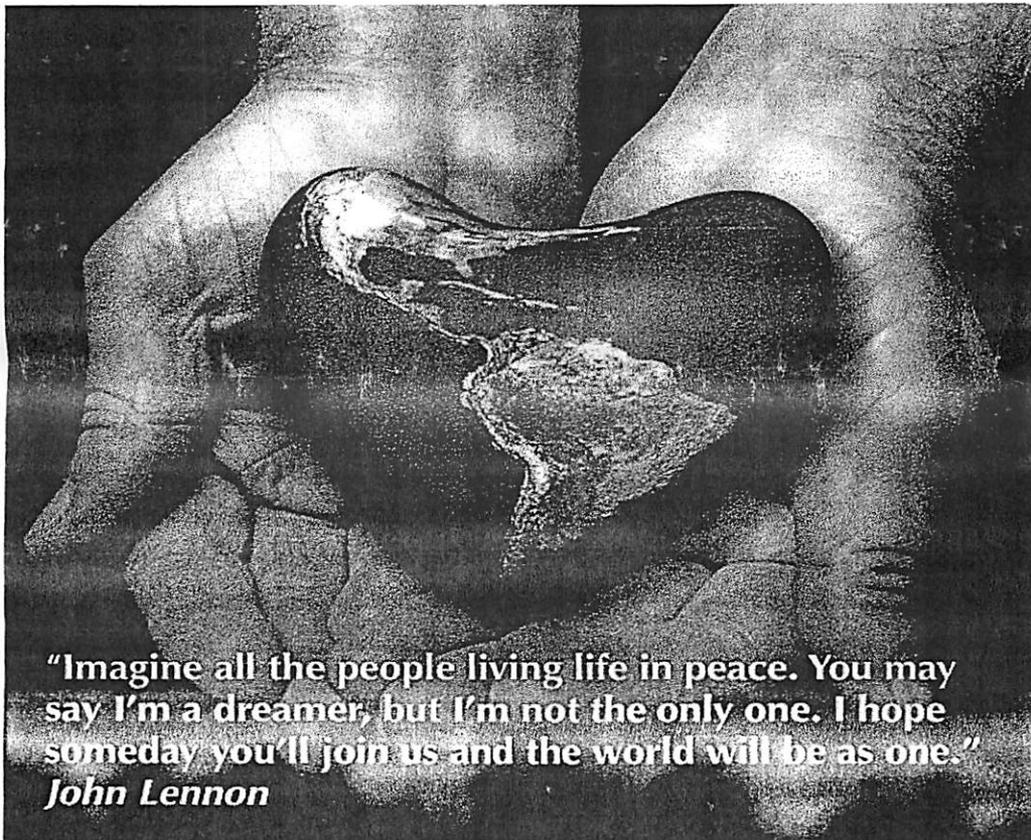
It's not a demonstration. The case of military sexual assault/trauma and institutional re-traumatization has been clearly demonstrated. THIS IS A DAY OF ACTION. By coming together as the courageous Patriots of a Great Nation, we will create the synergy required, by putting together all the scattered pieces already in existence to solve the PUZZLE of inaction. The solutions that affect the citizens will come from the citizens, and will be implemented by the citizens. The ONLY role of the politicians at the *Day of Freedom for The Forces* is to bring the already existing legislation and SIGN IT! No more talk, talk, talk. It is time to do the walk! The suffering of our service men & women has to end now!!!!

In Memory of
Steven Brion-Meisels

The Healer Who Restored my Internal Peace



The Angel of Peace



- inbox (11)
- Drafts (2)
- Spam (132)
- Trash (211)
- Folders (2)
- Projects
- Accounts
- Bankruptcy
- Craigslist
- Donations
- Drafts
- Housing
- Junk
- Mary-Kay
- Movement
- Paid_Bills
- Passwords
- Petra
- POCs
- Presentation
- Receipts
- Registrations
- Saved
- SBA
- Shopping (1)
- Springfield-Coll (1)
- Taxes
- Travel
- Unemployability
- Veteran
- Wells-Fargo

Responding to your message

Congressman Joe Kennedy
To Me

JOSEPH P. KENNEDY III
4TH DISTRICT, MASSACHUSETTS

1218 LONG W

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-2104

Dear Betzaida,

Thank you for contacting me about legislative responses to the ongoing problem of sexual assault in the military. I appreciate hearing from you on this important issue and am glad to have the opportunity to respond.

In May 2013, the Department of Defense issued its ninth annual report on sexual assault prevention and response in the Armed Services as required by Congress. The report found that over 26,000 men and women in uniform were sexually assaulted during 2012 up from over 19,000 in 2010. The findings were based on a confidential survey sent to 108,000 members of the armed forces, and they were released two days after the office charge of sexual assault prevention programs for the Air Force was arrested and charged with sexual battery.

This issue is one surrounded by complexity, but we cannot allow it to become one surrounded by uncertainty. Sexual assault, wherever it occurs, is an attack on the victim's fundamental rights to respect and dignity. Sexual assault in the military is not only an attack on the rights of the victim, but an attack on the values and the credibility of the United States Armed Services. It undermines the values which every service member promises to defend.

Because I share your commitment to preventing military sexual assault and to providing strong systems of recourse and justice for victims, I have co-sponsored two pieces of legislation that seek to combat sexual assault in the military and end its status as an ongoing problem. H.R. 1593, the Sexual Assault Training Oversight and Prevention Act, was introduced by Representative Jackie Speier of California on April 17, 2013. This bill would take the reporting, oversight, investigation, and victim care of sexual assaults out of the hands of the military's normal chain of command and place jurisdiction in the newly created, autonomous Sexual Assault Oversight and Response Office comprised of civilian and military experts. It has been referred to the U.S. House of Representatives Armed Services Committee Subcommittee on Military Personnel for further consideration. H.R. 1864 was introduced by Representative Jackie Walorski of Indiana on May 7, 2013. This bill would require the Department of Defense and the Department of Homeland Security to investigate allegations of retaliation in response to the reporting of rape, sexual assault, or sexual misconduct in the military. This bill passed the House of Representatives in a unanimous vote on June 27, 2013 and was sent to the United States Senate where it has been referred to the Senate Armed Services Committee for further consideration.

Our men and women in uniform promise, each and every day, to protect our nation whatever the cost. They deserve to receive the same unquestioned respect and support from us. I will continue to support legislation that embodies this commitment by seeking swiftly and decisively to end the problem of sexual assault in the military.

Thank you for taking the time to share your thoughts with me; I am honored to represent the constituents of the Fourth District of Massachusetts. Please feel free to call or write my office with future questions or concerns. Additionally, I invite you to visit my website at www.kennedy.house.gov or follow me on Facebook to learn more about my work at home and in Washington.

All my best,
[Signature]

Joseph P Kennedy
Member of Congress

YAHOO!
WEATHER

The forecast is beautiful.
A whole new way to see the weather.

Get the App

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Sponsored

Exclusive 5% Refund Bonus.
Max refund guaranteed.
Start for Free
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