

August 21, 2012

The Honorable Patrick Leahy  
Chairman, Committee on the Judiciary  
United States Senate  
437 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Chuck Grassley  
Ranking Member, Committee on the Judiciary  
United States Senate  
135 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

**Re: Request for Hearing on Hate Crimes and Hate Groups in the United States**

Dear Chairman Leahy and Ranking Member Grassley:

We, the undersigned organizations, representing millions of diverse constituents around the nation, respectfully request that the Senate Judiciary Committee urgently conduct a hearing next month on the need to address hate crimes and the proliferation of hate groups in the United States.

This is not a theoretical concern: According to the Southern Poverty Law Center, the number of hate groups in our country (currently numbering over a thousand) has grown by almost 60% since 2000. In 2010, more than 47% of hate crimes were racially motivated; 20% were motivated by the religion of the victim; 19% were based on sexual orientation and almost 13% of all hate crimes were based on ethnicity or national origin.

During the last month alone, six worshipers at a Sikh *Gurdwara* in Wisconsin were massacred by an attacker with known ties to hate groups, and approximately ten Islamic institutions and Muslim communities in seven states have experienced attacks including vandalism, a suspicious burning, shootings, and the desecration of religious sanctuaries. The Jewish community continues to experience persistent bias attacks, accounting for 65% of all religiously motivated hate crimes documented by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) in 2010. Hate crimes based on anti-Hispanic bias accounted for nearly 67% of ethnically motivated crimes in 2010. Although African Americans made up only 12.4% of the U.S. population in 2010, they accounted for 70% of all racially motivated hate crimes that year. Thousands of other individuals in our nation continue to be affected by hate violence due to their race, national origin, religious affiliation, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, disability, or immigration status.

According to hate crime statistics published by the FBI, there were at least 6,628 hate crimes reported in the United States in 2010. These incidents understate the problem of hate crimes in the United States, partly because of underreporting by victims, and partly because hate crime reporting by law enforcement agencies is voluntary. A 2005 report by the Bureau of Justice Statistics suggested that the true number of hate crimes in the United States may be 15 times higher than that which is currently reported. Underreporting may be compounded by policies and political rhetoric (in support of broadscale racial profiling, for example) that could make hate crime victims apprehensive about immigration and law enforcement authorities.

Given the persistence of hate crimes and the proliferation of hate groups, we believe that a hearing is both timely and necessary. We are especially interested in examining the status of the implementation of the Matthew Shepard Act; improvements to hate crime reporting and data collection; and the need for more robust hate crime prevention measures, consistent with protections for First Amendment rights and civil liberties. For additional information, please contact Mr. Rajdeep Singh, Director of Law and Policy at the Sikh Coalition, at [rajdeep@sikhcoalition.org](mailto:rajdeep@sikhcoalition.org) or by phone at (202) 747-4944. We look forward to partnering with you to address these important issues and offer gratitude for your consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

80-20 National Asian American PAC - Central Ohio Chapter  
80-20 National Asian American PAC - Southwest Ohio Chapter  
ACUDIR (Alameda County United in Defense of Immigrant Rights)  
Adhikaar  
Afghan American Bar Association  
African American Ministers Leadership Council  
American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC)  
American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD)  
American Association of University Women  
American Ethical Union  
American Jewish Committee  
American Society for Muslim Advancement (ASMA)  
Anti-Defamation League  
API Chaya, Seattle  
API Equality – LA  
Arab American Action Network (AAAN)-Chicago  
Arab American Association of New York  
Arab American Institute  
Arab Community Center for Economic and Social Services (ACCESS)  
Arab Muslim American Federation  
Asian American Council – Dayton, Ohio  
Asian American Federation  
Asian American Institute  
Asian American Justice Center, a member of the Asian American Center for Advancing Justice  
Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund  
Asian Americans for Community Involvement  
Asian Immigrant Women Advocates  
Asian Law Alliance  
Asian Law Caucus, a member of the Asian American Center for Advancing Justice  
Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance, AFL-CIO  
Asian Pacific American Legal Center, a member of the Asian American Center for Advancing Justice  
Asian Pacific Community in Action  
Asian & Pacific Islander American Health Forum  
Asian Services In Action, Inc. (ASIA)  
Association of Muslim American Lawyers (AMAL)  
Association of Physicians of Pakistani Descent of North America (APPNA)  
Bazon Center for Mental Health Law  
Blacks in Law Enforcement of America  
The Center for APA Women  
Center for Social Inclusion  
CenterLink: The Community of LGBT Centers  
Church Women United  
Club of Indian Women  
Community to Community Development  
Cordoba Initiative  
Council of Islamic Organizations of Greater Chicago (CIOGC)  
Council on American-Islamic Relations  
Council on American Islamic Relations – California (CAIR-CA)  
Council on American-Islamic Relations – New York Chapter (CAIR-NY)  
Council on American Islamic Relations – Texas, Dallas Fort Worth Chapter (CAIR-DFW)  
Council on American-Islamic Relations – Washington (CAIR-WA)  
Counselors Helping (South) Asians/Indians, Inc. (CHAI)  
Dignity Campaign  
DRUM – Desis Rising Up & Moving

The Episcopal Church  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America  
Equal Rights Center  
Family Equality Council  
Fellowship of Reconciliation  
FICA (Federation of India Community Associations of NE Ohio, Cleveland)  
Filipino Advocates for Justice (FAJ)  
Gay and Lesbian Medical Association  
Gay, Lesbian & Straight Education Network  
Gays and Lesbians Opposing Violence (GLOV)  
Groundswell – Auburn Theological Seminary  
Hindu American Foundation  
Hmong National Development  
Human Rights Campaign  
Human Rights First  
Human Rights Litigation and International Advocacy Clinic, University of Minnesota Law School  
Immigration Equality  
Interfaith Alliance  
Interfaith Center of New York  
International Human Rights Clinic, NYU School of Law\*  
Islamic Circle of North America (ICNA)  
Islamic Networks Group (ING)  
Japanese American Citizens League  
Jewish Council for Public Affairs  
Jewish Labor Committee  
Jews Against Islamophobia (JAI)  
Jews For Racial and Economic Justice (JFREJ)  
LatinoJustice PRLDEF  
Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service  
The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights  
Karamah: Muslim Women Lawyers for Human Rights  
MAI Family Services  
Manavi  
MIRA! Mississippi Immigrants Rights Alliance  
Mujeres Unidas y Activas  
Muslim Advocates  
Muslim American Civil Liberties Coalition (MACLC)  
Muslim Bar Association of Chicago  
Muslim Bar Association of New York (MuBANY)  
Muslim Consultative Network  
Muslim Public Affairs Council  
Muslim Public Affairs Council – New York Chapter  
NAACP  
NAFSA: Association of International Educators  
National Asian Pacific American Bar Association (NAPABA)  
National Asian Pacific American Families Against Substance Abuse  
National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum  
National Center for Transgender Equality  
National Coalition for Asian Pacific American Community Development  
National Congress of American Indians  
National Council of Jewish Women

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\* Affiliation provided for identification purposes only.

National Council of La Raza  
National Disability Rights Network  
National Fair Housing Alliance  
National Gay and Lesbian Task Force  
National Immigration Law Center  
National Minority AIDS Council  
National Network for Arab American Communities (NNAAC)  
National Network for Immigrant and Refugee Rights  
National Organization for Women  
National Queer Asian Pacific Islander Alliance (NQAPIA)  
Network of Arab American Professionals (NAAP)  
OneAmerica  
Open Society Foundations  
Organization of Chinese Americans, Silicon Valley Chapter  
The Pakistani American Public Affairs Committee  
People For the American Way Foundation  
PFLAG National (Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays)  
Priority Africa Network  
Raksha  
Rights Working Group  
Sakhi for South Asian Women  
San Diego Immigrant Rights Consortium  
Secular Coalition for America  
Sikh American Legal Defense and Education Fund (SALDEF)  
The Sikh Coalition  
Sisters of Mercy Institute Justice Team  
Social Justice Guild of the First Existentialist Congregation of Atlanta  
South Asian American Policy & Research Institute (SAAPRI)  
South Asian Americans Leading Together (SAALT)  
South Asian Bar Association of New York (SABANY)  
South Asian Bar Association of Northern California (SABA-NC)  
South Asian Bar Association of Philadelphia  
South Asian Bar Association of Southern California  
South Asian Bar Association of Washington, D.C. (SABA-DC)  
South Asian Network  
South Asian Progressive Action Collective  
South Asian Youth Action (SAYA)  
Southeast Asia Resource Action Center (SEARAC)  
Southern Poverty Law Center  
Trikone-Chicago  
Turning Point for Women and Families  
Union for Reform Judaism  
Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations  
The United Church of Christ/Justice and Witness Ministries  
United Methodist Church, General Board of Church and Society  
UNITED SIKHS  
The United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism  
USPAK Foundation  
Women in Islam Inc.  
Young People For  
YWCA USA

cc: Committee on the Judiciary – United States Senate