

December 13, 2021

**RE: Vote “YES” in Support of the Combating International Islamophobia Act (H.R.5665)**

To the U.S. House of Representatives:

We, the 53 undersigned organizations, write to urge every member of the U.S. House of Representatives to vote “YES” in support of Congresswomen Ilhan Omar and Jan Schakowsky’s Combating International Islamophobia Act (H.R.5665) – legislation to establish a special envoy office at the U.S. State Department to monitor and combat international Islamophobia.

House Majority Leader has stated that H.R. 5665 will most likely receive a vote on the House floor this week. The act was approved by the U.S. House Foreign Affairs Committee on Friday.

We encourage bipartisan support for the Combating International Islamophobia Act. During the act's debate, we also expect it to be discussed and debated with courtesy and respect.

We strongly support the creation of a special envoy position for combating and monitoring Islamophobia as instances of anti-Muslim hate crimes continue to rise in the U.S. and worldwide.

**About the Combating International Islamophobia Act**

H.R. 5665 would compel the State Department to develop a more comprehensive approach to fighting the global increase of Islamophobia, increasing its capacity to monitor and confront state and non-state actors worldwide and ensuring a safer environment for American Muslims.

The two primary aims of the Combating International Islamophobia Act are:

1. Establishing an Office to Monitor and Combat Islamophobia at the State Department headed by a Special Envoy for Monitoring and Combating Islamophobia.
2. Amending the Foreign Assistance Act and International Religious Freedom Act to require annual reporting on Islamophobia in each foreign country and the steps taken by that country to combat it through educational programming and public awareness initiatives.

The United States currently monitors and combats religious persecution internationally. The Combating International Islamophobia Act would extend this mission to Islamophobia.

The act would also provide valuable information for understanding Islamophobia as a global phenomenon and give the U.S. a new tool to combat it.

While global Islamophobia, anti-Muslim state policies and hate incidents have increased, for the past two decades the American Muslim community has consistently called for the creation of a

special envoy position to monitor and combat this rising tide of hate – the Combating International Islamophobia Act would make this special envoy position a reality.

**Reasons to Support the Combating International Islamophobia Act:**

In its 2021 annual report, the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) identified three Countries of Particular Concern primarily for their treatment of Muslims.

Several additional countries listed by USCIRF were identified as having patterns of mistreatment and human rights violations against either their entire Muslim populations or particular sects of Muslims. This includes several Muslim-majority countries.

State acts of persecution and violence against Muslims can be found in India and Burma – in addition to China, which the United States recognized as committing a genocide and crimes against humanity against Uyghur Muslims and other Turkic minority groups living the country's Uyghur region.

Anti-Muslim rhetoric, bigotry and acts of violence also go together with the rise of political parties that outwardly attack the rights of Muslims, especially in France and other parts of Europe.

Transnational white supremacist and Islamophobic hate group networks have also inspired their followers to commit acts of anti-Muslim violence and terrorism, including but not limited to the tragic summer 2021 murder of a Muslim family in London, Ontario and the 2019 Christchurch, New Zealand Mosque shootings.

Again, we urge the House of Representatives to swiftly approve the Combating International Islamophobia Act, which would provide valuable information for understanding Islamophobia as a global phenomenon and give the U.S. a new tool to combat it.

Sincerely,

American Muslim Empowerment Network (AMEN)

American Muslims for Palestine

Americans for Democracy & Human Rights in Bahrain

Americans for Justice in Palestine Action

Americans for Peace Now

Arizona Muslims Alliance

Central Valley Islamic Council

Christian Methodist Episcopal Church  
Christian Reformed Church Office of Social Justice  
Church World Service  
Common Defense  
Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR)  
Democracy for the Arab World Now (DAWN)  
Engage Action  
Friends of Sabeel North America  
Human Rights First  
ICNA Council for Social Justice  
Indian American Muslim Council  
International Islamophobia Studies Research Association  
Islamic Association of North America  
Islamophobia Studies Center  
Islamophobia Studies Journal  
JAMAAT -- Jews and Muslims and Allies Acting Together  
Jetpac Resource Center  
Jewish Voice for Peace Action  
Just Peace Advocates/Mouvement Pour Une Paix Juste  
Libyan American Alliance  
MPower Action Fund  
MPower Change  
Muslim American Society (MAS)  
Muslim Public Affairs Council  
Muslim Student Association West  
Muslim Ummah of North America (MUNA)  
National Immigration Law Center

National Iranian American Council Action

Oxfam America

Partnership for the Advancement of New Americans

Peace Action

Poligon Education Fund

Reconstructionist Rabbinical Association

Secure Justice

Sisters of Mercy of the Americas - Justice Team

South Asian Americans Leading Together (SAALT)

Support Life Foundation

The Shoulder to Shoulder Campaign: Standing with American Muslims, Advancing American Ideals

Together We Serve

U.S. Council of Muslim Organizations

United Church of Christ, Justice and Witness Ministries

Veterans For Peace

Wind of the Spirit Immigrant Resource Center

Women Watch Afrika

Women's Action for New Directions (WAND)

Yemeni American Merchants Association, Inc.