

In the name of God, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful.
All praise and thanks belong to God, the Lord of the Worlds.
May peace and prayers be upon Prophet Muhammad and all of God's prophets.



July 10, 2025

The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Leader Jeffries:

On behalf of the nation's largest Muslim civil rights and advocacy organization, and the American Muslim community we serve, we write to urge the House Democratic leadership to take firm action in response to the rising tide of anti-Muslim and anti-Palestinian hate in Congress, including by pursuing a censure resolution against Rep. Randy Fine.

As you know, Rep. Fine publicly attacked Rep. Ilhan Omar on the social media platform X this week, writing: *"I'm sure it is difficult to see us welcome the killer of so many of your fellow Muslim terrorists. The only shame is that you serve in Congress."*

We appreciate the joint statement that you, Whip Katherine Clark, and Chair Pete Aguilar have issued condemning Rep. Fine's latest anti-Muslim attack on Congresswoman Omar and calling on him to apologize.

However, we must be honest: Rep. Fine will never apologize, this is far from the first time he and other members of Congress have engaged in such dangerous anti-Muslim rhetoric, and our community has been deeply concerned by the House leadership's failure to consistently and strongly counter various other attacks, including similarly bigoted comments by Rep. Fine, Rep. Brian Mast and Rep. Josh Gottheimer.

On November 1, 2023, during a debate on foreign aid, **Representative Brian Mast declared on the House floor:** *"I would encourage the other side to not so lightly throw around the idea of 'innocent Palestinian civilians,' as is frequently said," and "I don't think we would so lightly throw around the term 'innocent Nazi civilians' during World War II."* He further added, *"There are very few innocent Palestinian civilians."*

This shocking comparison equated millions of Palestinians with the Nazi perpetrators of the Holocaust and openly denied their humanity. In response, Representative Sara Jacobs, - one of the most prominent progressive Jewish members of Congress and a principled ally of the American Muslim community, - introduced a resolution to censure Rep. Mast. [That resolution was ultimately withdrawn](#) and House leadership never spoke up against Rep. Mast's remarks.

The contrast between the Democratic caucus failing to unite to condemn vile remarks by the likes of Rep. Brian Mast, while the Republican caucus has repeatedly united to launch bad faith attacks on Representative Rashida Tlaib and Rep. Ilhan Omar, is beyond demoralizing for the American Muslim and Palestinian American communities.

Due to a lack of strong pushback, the rhetoric from Republican Members has since grown even more extreme. In fact, Representative Randy Fine has made it his brand. [In April 2025, he told Reps. Rashida Tlaib and Ilhan Omar to "consider leaving \[Congress\] before I get there. #BombsAway."](#) He called Rep. Tlaib "*a terrorist*" in May, adding that some Democrats "[shouldn't be Americans](#)." In May, he responded to Rep. Tlaib's warning that Israel was starving Gaza by tweeting: "[Tell your fellow Muslim terrorists to release the hostages and surrender. Until then, #StarveAway.](#)"

On May 22, Fine appeared on Fox News and said: "*The Palestinian cause is an evil one... We nuked the Japanese twice. That needs to be the same here.*" These are not gaffes. They are genocidal statements from a sitting Member of Congress that should have been condemned and opposed.

This hateful rhetoric is not isolated. On June 30, 2025, Representative Brandon Gill responded to a video of New York Assemblymember Zohran Mamdani, who is of South Asian Muslim heritage, eating rice with his hands, a common cultural practice, by posting: "[Civilized people in America don't eat like this. If you refuse to adopt Western customs, go back to the Third World.](#)" That is not a policy disagreement; it is pure xenophobia and white supremacy.

Republicans are not the only ones engaging in this rhetoric: In October 2023, [Democratic New Jersey Representative Josh Gottheimer reportedly made anti-Muslim remarks](#) about Israel's war on Gaza during a closed-door Democratic caucus meeting. When a colleague expressed concern that a vigil for victims of the war had excluded Muslim leaders, Gottheimer allegedly interjected, stating either "because they're all guilty" or "because they should feel guilty."

These remarks, which were reportedly overheard by multiple attendees, faced no formal public condemnation from House leadership. When such sentiments go unchallenged by Democratic caucus leadership, they further normalize the dehumanization of Muslim Americans at a time of rising hate and violence.

Outside the walls of Congress, the consequences of failing to address normalized hate are increasingly visible. On October 14, 2023, six-year-old [Palestinian-American Wadea Al-Fayoume](#) was stabbed 26 times and murdered in his Illinois home in a hate crime sparked by anti-Muslim rhetoric in the week after the Oct. 7th attacks. In May 2024, [a three-year-old Palestinian-American child was nearly drowned in a Texas pool](#) by a woman who asked her hijab wearing mother what language they were speaking and what country they were from.

In February 2025, a Jewish American man in Miami Beach opened fire on two Israeli tourists, [mistakenly believing they were Palestinian](#). These are not isolated tragedies - they are part of a broader environment of dehumanization and political incitement.

As CAIR documented in [our 2025 Civil Rights Report, Unconstitutional Crackdowns](#), our offices received 8,658 complaints nationwide in 2024—the highest number recorded since CAIR began publishing civil rights reports in 1996. This dramatic rise reflects both the volume and institutional scale of anti-Muslim bias being normalized across the country.

We are also witnessing the emergence of a McCarthyist anti-Muslim political climate, where Republican-led committee investigations, backed by [House Speaker Mike Johnson](#), are targeting dozens of Muslim and Palestinian organizations. These include efforts to revive the “nonprofit killer bill,” alongside proposed anti-boycott legislation and speech codes that conflate criticism of the Israeli government’s war crimes in Gaza with the vile bigotry of antisemitism. These campaigns aim to criminalize dissent, especially by Muslim and Palestinian Americans.

The Democratic Party’s leadership in Congress must take firm and consistent action to defend the American Muslim and Palestinian communities, including members of Congress, now under coordinated attack.

Although we welcome your condemnation of Rep. Fine’s latest comment, leadership must go further than statements condemning only this particular remark without taking any firm action. We respectfully urge leadership to continue taking bolder and more consistent steps in combating Islamophobia and anti-Palestinian racism. We call on you to:

1. **Introduce and advocate for a formal censure resolution against Rep. Randy Fine** in response to his various hateful attacks about Muslims and Palestinians, *specifically including anti-Palestinian racism and Islamophobia levelled against Rep. Tlaib*. Even if the pursuit of censure fails due to Republican control of the House, the introduction and advocacy for the resolution will send a message that House Democratic leadership takes bigotry seriously and that no member of Congress can smear and threaten Muslim and Palestinian members of Congress without facing consequences.
2. **Publicly affirm your support and solidarity** with all Muslim members of Congress, and ensure that Capitol Police is providing sufficient security to them on Capitol Hill, while traveling and while in their home districts.

3. **Commit to institutional measures** to combat Islamophobia in Congress, including through member education, ethics standards, and enforcement mechanisms when Democratic caucus members make hateful remarks, like Rep. Gottheimer's reported comment.

This moment is a defining moral test for the Democratic Party in Congress. No Member should endure slander, incitement, or threats without a strong defense from their leadership. This moment will be remembered. American Muslims are watching. So are millions who believe that justice and safety must be defended for all, not only for some. The choice before your caucus is whether to meet this moment with courage or allow hate to go unchallenged.

We would welcome the opportunity to meet with you or your team to discuss these matters further. But the time for action is now.

Sincerely,

Basim Elkarra
CAIR Action Executive Director

Robert S. McCaw
CAIR Director of Government Affairs Department