

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 his family.



Council on American-Islamic Relations
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February 2, 2026

The Honorable Josh Gottheimer
1107 Longworth House Office Building
Washington DC 20515

The Honorable Claudia Tenney
2230 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington DC 20515

The Honorable Jared Golden
1107 Longworth House Office Building
Washington DC 20515

Re: CAIR Demand for Immediate Retraction and Apology for False and Defamatory Feb. 2 Letter

Dear Representatives Gottheimer, Tenney, and Golden:

On behalf of the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), the nation's largest Muslim civil rights and advocacy organization, we write to demand a retraction and an apology for your defamatory Feb. 2nd letter that falsely claims that CAIR has been "*conspicuously silent*" regarding violence against protesters in Iran.

In part, your defamatory letter states: "*Yet, as the Iranian regime guns down peaceful protesters, tortures dissidents, and shuts off the internet to hide its crimes, your voices are unfortunately and conspicuously silent.*"

This claim is false.

On January 14, CAIR issued [a public statement about events in Iran](#). In this statement, which your staff could have easily located with minimal research effort and which was issued nearly three weeks before your February 2 letter, CAIR opposed a U.S. war on Iran and also specifically, "**expressed support for the right of Iranians to peacefully protest, condemned attacks on peaceful protesters, and condemned violent attacks by rioters, including arson attacks on mosques and desecrations of the Quran.**"

That CAIR statement also said that "**...the Iranian government should meet the Iranian people's legitimate demands for change and support freedom instead of oppression for**

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others in the region, including the Syrian people it helped oppress through its backing of the Assad regime."

Your letter is further contradicted by CAIR's public, nationally broadcast [January 15 appearance by CAIR National Deputy Director Edward Ahmed Mitchell on The Hill's morning program "Sunrise on the Hill,"](#) where he addressed the situation in Iran.

During that live interview, Mr. Mitchell stated: *"...we've been very disturbed not only by what's happening in Iran, the killing of protesters, the attacks on mosques."* and added, *"Sadly many governments that are funded by the United States have killed protesters, and that's wrong, and it's wrong when it happens in Iran, too."* He further emphasized CAIR's consistent human-rights framework, stating: *"But our nation can't selectively decide we're going to go to war only when protesters are harmed in a country run by an American adversary. We need to support human rights across the board."*

Mr. Mitchell also stated that, *"the Iranian people should decide their future, and they should decide who leads them through peaceful political means. And the Iranian government should let the Iranian people have that demand met through peaceful political means."*

This nationally distributed television and online appearance occurred more than two weeks before your February 2 letter and further refutes your claim that CAIR was *"conspicuously silent"* regarding violence against protesters in Iran.

Finally, it is important to note that the framing of your letter is also dishonest. Your letter begins by stating, *"Over the last two years, you have shown no hesitation in loudly and unequivocally condemning our democratic ally Israel, after terrorists brutally raped, burned alive, decapitated, and murdered more than 1,200 people, including dozens of Americans."*

In reality, we condemned the Israeli apartheid government for responding to the Oct. 7th attack by using American taxpayer dollars to commit a genocide in Gaza, killing at least 70,000 people, most of them women and children, as well as likely tens of thousands more still trapped under the rubble. We have also condemned the Israeli government for its decades of oppression and occupation of the Palestinian people.

Unlike many supporters of the Israeli government, CAIR has also shown moral consistency over the past four decades by also condemning violence against Israeli civilians committed by Hamas, from its [suicide bombings in the 1990s](#) to its attacks on civilians [on Oct. 7th-- multiple different times](#).

Your selective criticism appears to target CAIR not for silence, but for the moral consistency your offices have failed to show. By supporting Israel's genocide in Gaza and the many human rights abuses it committed long before the start of the genocide, you have made it clear you do not care about human rights for all.

This inconsistency raises the question of whether your offices truly care about Iranian people or whether you have only expressed support for Iranian protesters because they were protesting an adversary of the Israeli government.

In any case, your claim that CAIR has been "*conspicuously silent*" about events in Iran is demonstrably false. We therefore demand from your respective offices:

1. An **immediate public retraction** correcting the false claim;
2. A **public apology** acknowledging the misrepresentation of CAIR's record; and
3. **Written assurance** that your offices will refrain from repeating or amplifying this false allegation.

CAIR remains prepared to engage in good-faith dialogue about human rights and the protection of all people. What we will not accept is the deliberate erasure of our public record.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Robert S. McCaw". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned to the left of the typed name.

Robert S. McCaw
Government Affairs Department Director
Council on American-Islamic Relations