



April 9, 2018

**OPPOSE THE CONFIRMATION OF MICHAEL POMPEO TO SERVE AS
SECRETARY OF STATE**

Dear Senator:

On behalf of The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights – a coalition of more than 200 national organizations committed to promote and protect the civil and human rights of all persons in the United States – and the undersigned civil and human rights organizations, we write to express our opposition to the confirmation of CIA Director Michael Pompeo as Secretary of State. Mr. Pompeo has a troubling history of statements and policy positions that have alienated marginalized communities, which raises serious doubts about his ability to represent all in America and promote human rights for all individuals abroad.

During his first congressional campaign in 2010, Mr. Pompeo ran on a disturbing, exclusionary message. His opponent was a natural-born American citizen of Indian descent. Yet when billboards appeared in the district urging the public to “Vote American, Vote Pompeo” and “True Americans Vote For Pompeo,” he refused to condemn the messages.¹ This occurred on the heels of an incident in which his campaign had shared a link to an article calling his opponent a “turban topper” who “could be a muslim, a hindu, a buddhist etc who knows.”² Mr. Pompeo claimed the action was a mistake and apologized,³ but his record as a congressman showed that he continued to harbor animus towards American Muslims.

Following the 2013 Boston Marathon bombing, for example, then-Congressman Pompeo claimed that American Muslim groups were “potentially complicit”⁴ for not adequately condemning the attack, even though the American Muslim community was unequivocal in doing so.⁵ The following year, in a speech to a Wichita, Kansas church, he discussed terrorism in overly-simplistic religious terms,⁶ ignoring the fact that attackers and their victims can adhere to any faith or none at all. He also maintained close relationships with anti-Muslim organizations and individuals such as ACT For America and Frank Gaffney,

¹ https://www.huffingtonpost.com/2010/10/31/raj-goyle-mike-pompeo-billboard_n_776659.html

² https://www.huffingtonpost.com/2010/08/12/mike-pompeo-gop-candidate_n_680612.html

³ <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/11/19/us/politics/donald-trump-mike-pompeo-cia.html>

⁴ <http://thehill.com/video/house/304743-gop-lawmaker-silence-on-terror-attacks-makes-islamic-leaders-potentially-complicit>

⁵ https://www.huffingtonpost.com/anai-rhoads/muslim-groups-pompeo_b_3431339.html

⁶ <https://theintercept.com/2016/11/23/mike-pompeo-religious-war/>

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UnidosUS
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National Partnership for
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Anti-Defamation League
President & CEO
Vanita Gupta



who even accused Grover Norquist of ties to Islamic infiltrators.⁷ In addition, as a House member, Mr. Pompeo voiced support for expanding mass surveillance programs,⁸ and he cosponsored legislation to ban all refugee admissions, regardless of country, even though refugees were already subjected to a years-long vetting process.⁹ In 2014, he characterized the Senate’s report on CIA torture as a “liberal game being played by the ACLU and Senator Feinstein,” and called those who engaged in torture “patriots.”¹⁰

Mr. Pompeo also has a history of marginalizing other vulnerable populations. For example, long after the repeal of the failed “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” policy barring LGBTQ people from military service, he continued to argue for their exclusion, and he characterized the 2015 Supreme Court ruling establishing marriage equality as a “shocking abuse of power.”¹¹ And he has repeatedly voted to restrict women’s access to vital reproductive health care both in the United States and abroad. As a member of Congress, he voted to eliminate federal funding for Planned Parenthood,¹² even though the organization can by law only use federal funds for services such as cancer screenings and birth control¹³ and is the largest provider of contraception for low-income women. He also supported imposing the Mexico City Policy/global gag rule,¹⁴ which forces health providers to choose between their ethical obligations to inform their clients about all legal reproductive health care options or forego critically needed resources to serve women in poor countries. More recently, Mr. Pompeo’s reported hostility toward CIA diversity and inclusion initiatives¹⁵ raises serious concerns about his commitment and ability to lead the Department of State’s diverse, multinational workforce.

The Secretary of State is one of our most important positions for promoting and protecting human rights. This cabinet level position has a unique and important role requiring the ability to build international coalitions and serve as our representative in international negotiations. Mr. Pompeo’s documented anti-Muslim bias is dangerous to American foreign policy, will cripple his ability to develop essential relationships with Muslim-majority countries, and will irreparably undermine his ability to lead the State Department workforce. In light of Mr. Pompeo’s divisive and extreme record, we urge you to oppose his confirmation. Thank you for your consideration of our views.

Sincerely,

The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights
18MillionRising.org
Alliance for Justice
American Jewish World Service

⁷ <https://www.thedailybeast.com/mike-pompeos-disturbingly-consistent-friendships-with-anti-muslim-bigots>

⁸ <http://www.mcclatchydc.com/news/nation-world/national/national-security/article56869248.html>

⁹ <http://foreignpolicy.com/2016/06/15/house-republicans-seek-blanket-ban-on-all-refugees/>

¹⁰ <http://www.kansas.com/news/politics-government/election/article115636563.html>

¹¹ <https://www.advocate.com/politics/2018/3/13/secretary-state-pick-mike-pompeo-brings-anti-lgbt-record-him>

¹² <http://www.ibtimes.com/5-ways-mike-pompeo-different-rex-tillerson-2622438>

¹³ <https://www.factcheck.org/2011/04/planned-parenthood/>

¹⁴ <http://clerk.house.gov/evs/2011/roll147.xml>

¹⁵ <http://foreignpolicy.com/2017/09/08/more-white-more-male-more-jesus-cia-employees-fear-pompeo-is-quietly-killing-the-agencys-diversity-mandate/>

American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee
Americans United for Separation of Church and State
Arab American Institute
Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund (AALDEF)
Asian Americans Advancing Justice - AAJC
Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance
Center for Health and Gender Equity (CHANGE)
Center for the Study of Hate & Extremism, California State University-San Bernardino
Clearinghouse on Women's Issues
Defending Rights & Dissent
Engage Action
Equal Justice Society
Equal Rights Advocates
Equality California
Farmworker Justice
Global Forum on MSM & HIV
Global Network of Black People working in HIV
Housing Works, Inc.
Human Rights Advocates
Human Rights Campaign
Human Rights Watch
Indivisible
International Association of Women in Radio and Television - IAWRT
Japanese American Citizens League
Lambda Legal
Matthew Shepard Foundation
Muslim Advocates
Muslim Public Affairs Council
NAACP
NARAL Pro-Choice America
National Association of Human Rights Workers
National Association of Social Workers
National Center for Transgender Equality
National Council of Jewish Women
National Hispanic Media Coalition
National Immigration Law Center
National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health
National LGBTQ Task Force Action Fund
National Organization for Women
People For the American Way
PFLAG National
Planned Parenthood Federation of America
Population Institute

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Protect Democracy
Southern Poverty Law Center
The Interfaith Center of New York
UnidosUS (formerly the National Council of La Raza)
Veterans For Peace
WomenNC
Woodhull Freedom Foundation
World Without Genocide at Mitchell Hamline School of Law