

MEDIA ADVISORY

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Muslim Advocates, ACLU chapters to FBI Director: Use Investigative Tools to Protect Communities, Not Discriminate Against Them

As FBI Mueller testifies to Congress, national civil rights groups seek full disclosure of FBI agents' surveillance guidelines, details on racial & ethnic community mapping

WHO: Farhana Khera, Executive Director, [Muslim Advocates](#), a national legal advocacy and educational organization. Ms. Khera is available to discuss why FBI Director Robert Mueller's should be forthcoming with Congress about how the broad array of tools made available to agents since 9/11 to protect Americans are instead being used to pry into the private lives of potentially millions of its own citizens, especially American Muslims.

WHAT: As FBI Director Robert Mueller testifies before Congress this **Wednesday, July 28, 2010**, [Muslim Advocates](#) and the American Civil Liberties Union urge Director Mueller to tell Congress the full story about how the agency's extraordinary tools to fight crime are being turned against millions of its own citizens, including American Muslims. Tools intended to protect the country—such as massive data collection and analysis—instead, give the FBI unprecedented and unchecked power to amass huge amounts of detailed information on innocent Americans and community groups.

Such discriminatory techniques as collecting demographic data on racial and ethnic communities, including the location of ethnic businesses and the financial transactions, charitable giving activities, and vocations of racial and ethnic communities, without any individualized suspicion of wrongdoing, are ineffective, breed fear and mistrust, and infringe on fundamental constitutional rights and freedoms. At least one FBI field office also recently called for the collection of data on the conservative religious practice of Muslims in the area.

That is why, today, several state chapters of the ACLU join the national legal and educational organization Muslim Advocates in an ongoing legal effort to seek full disclosure of the unedited copy of guidelines the FBI has issued to its agents.

(more)

In addition to encouraging massive data gathering targeting racial and ethnic communities based on generalized fear and suspicion, the guidelines, it is believed—on the basis of an earlier, pre-publication viewing of the document by Muslim Advocates—allow FBI agents to infiltrate mosques, churches and synagogues and religious and political gatherings, without any evidence that criminal activity is taking place. These activities chill First Amendment-protected freedoms to pray, to express oneself, and to join groups without government intrusion.

WHEN: 10 am ET, WEDNESDAY, July 28, 2010

WHERE: FBI Director Mueller will testify before the Senate Judiciary Committee Hearing on FBI Oversight, Room 226, Dirksen Senate Office Building.

WHY: Law-abiding American Muslims have experienced increasing levels of discriminatory, invasive and abusive conduct by federal agents in the years since 9/11. The rights to privacy, to express oneself, to associate freely and to religious belief are key rights protected by the Constitution and courts. Through its lawsuit against the Department of Justice, Muslim Advocates seeks to protect the rights of innocent Americans and to ensure the full participation of American Muslims in civil society.

To speak to Ms. Farhana Khera about Muslim Advocates' lawsuit against the DOJ over the FBI surveillance guidelines, or to learn more about Muslim Advocates, please call or email **John Showalter, Communications Director, 415.336.1868, media@muslimadvocates.org**.

Muslim Advocates (www.muslimadvocates.org) is a national legal advocacy and educational organization. Its mission is to promote freedom, justice and equality for all, regardless of faith, by providing leadership through legal advocacy, policy engagement, and civic education, and by serving as a legal resource to promote the full and meaningful participation of Muslims in American public life.