

May 15, 2017

**DELIVERED VIA U.S. POSTAL MAIL AND E-MAIL**

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Secretary Shantel Krebs  
Secretary of State  
Capitol Building  
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Dear Attorney General Jackley and Secretary Krebs,

Muslim Advocates is a civil rights organization dedicated to protecting the rights of all Americans to live and worship free from discrimination. We write to express our deep concern regarding a meeting about the “history of Islam” you both reportedly attended on May 6, 2017 in Rapid City, South Dakota that was hosted by the American Congress for Truth (ACT!) for America.<sup>1</sup> ACT! for America has a well-documented history of perpetuating offensive racial and religious stereotypes about Islam and Muslims. Numerous elected officials and community leaders have discredited and repudiated ACT! for America after learning more about the gross inaccuracies and biases driving their work; we urge you both to do the same.

The Southern Poverty Law Center has described ACT! for America as the largest grassroots anti-Muslim group in the country and has compared the organization to the “KKK for Muslims.”<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Rachael Revesz, *US officials attend ‘hate group’ meeting where Muslims are compared to ‘sharks,’* The Independent, May 7, 2017, available at <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/americas/south-dakota-officials-act-for-america-anti-islam-anti-muslim-brigitte-gabriel-donald-trump-a7722981.html>; Mike Anderson, *‘Anti-Muslim’ group gives presentation in Rapid City,* Rapid City Journal, May 6, 2017, available at [http://rapidcityjournal.com/news/local/anti-muslim-group-gives-presentation-in-rapid-city/article\\_544fb28c-acb0-5f34-ab9f-99c58074fa0f.html](http://rapidcityjournal.com/news/local/anti-muslim-group-gives-presentation-in-rapid-city/article_544fb28c-acb0-5f34-ab9f-99c58074fa0f.html).

<sup>2</sup> Rachael Revesz, *US officials attend ‘hate group’ meeting where Muslims are compared to ‘sharks,’* The Independent, May 7, 2017, available at <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/americas/south-dakota-officials-act-for-america-anti-islam-anti-muslim-brigitte-gabriel-donald-trump-a7722981.html>.

The founder of ACT! for America, Brigitte Tudor (who is better known as Brigitte Gabriel) has a long, documented history of trafficking in wholly untrue and derogatory statements about Islam and Muslims; she has previously stated that practicing Muslims cannot be “loyal citizen[s] of the United States.”<sup>3</sup> Such anti-Muslim rhetoric demeans an entire religious group while also encouraging individuals to profile and target a particular community based solely on inaccurate and animus-based stereotypes.

ACT! for America’s rhetoric and teachings are highly offensive, disparage the faith of millions of Americans, and promote biased policies that lead to the discriminatory targeting of individuals and communities based solely on religion and ethnicity without evidence of actual wrongdoing. The organization’s efforts foster fear and suspicion of American Muslims among the public, and such distrust directly correlates to a rise in discrimination, bullying, harassment, and anti-Muslim violence. By attending ACT! for America’s May 6 presentation in Rapid City, you both have only added more credibility and legitimacy to its work and mission, while signaling to your constituents that you support ACT! for America’s harmful animus-fueled beliefs. In this time of dramatic increase in religious-based hate crimes across the country, we strongly urge you both to publicly denounce ACT! for America and its hateful rhetoric. South Dakota Muslims—and all of its citizens—deserve the right to know that their public officials support them and our country’s bedrock constitutional guarantee of religious freedom.

Please do not hesitate to let us know if we can provide any further information regarding our concerns. We may be reached at (415) 692-1484 or [juvaria@muslimadvocates.org](mailto:juvaria@muslimadvocates.org).

Sincerely,

Juvaria Khan  
Staff Attorney

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<sup>3</sup> Southern Poverty Law Center, *Act for America*, available at <https://www.splcenter.org/fighting-hate/extremist-files/group/act-america> (explaining that “[t]hroughout its existence, ACT has stayed true to its mission by working to advance anti-Muslim legislation at the local and federal level while flooding the American public with wild hate speech demonizing Muslims.”); see also Christopher Mathias, *Anti-Muslim Hate Group Brags About Influence in Trump’s White House*, Huffington Post, Dec. 14, 2016, available at [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/act-for-america-trump-influence\\_us\\_58508f98e4b092f086861e1c](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/act-for-america-trump-influence_us_58508f98e4b092f086861e1c).