



September 24, 2020

**Officers**

**Chair**  
Judith L. Lichtman  
National Partnership for  
Women & Families  
**Vice Chairs**  
Thomas A. Saenz  
Mexican American Legal  
Defense and Educational Fund  
Hillary Shelton  
NAACP  
**Secretary/Treasurer**  
Lee A. Saunders  
American Federation of State,  
County & Municipal Employees

**Board of Directors**

Kevin Allis  
National Congress of American Indians  
Kimberly Churches  
AAUW  
Kristen Clarke  
Lawyers' Committee for  
Civil Rights Under Law  
Alphonso B. David  
Human Rights Campaign  
Rory Gamble  
International Union, UAW  
Lily Eskelsen Garcia  
National Education Association  
Fatima Goss Graves  
National Women's Law Center  
Jonathan Greenblatt  
Anti-Defamation League  
Mary Kay Henry  
Service Employees International Union  
Sherrilyn Ifill  
NAACP Legal Defense and  
Educational Fund, Inc.  
David H. Inoue  
Japanese American Citizens League  
Derrick Johnson  
NAACP  
Virginia Kase  
League of Women Voters of the  
United States  
Michael B. Keegan  
People for the American Way  
Samer E. Khalaf  
American-Arab  
Anti-Discrimination Committee  
Marc Morial  
National Urban League  
Janet Murguía  
UnidosUS  
Debra L. Ness  
National Partnership for  
Women & Families  
Christian F. Nunes  
National Organization for Women  
Rabbi Jonah Pesner  
Religious Action Center  
Of Reform Judaism  
Lisa Rice  
National Fair Housing Alliance  
Anthony Romero  
American Civil Liberties Union  
Maria Town  
American Association of  
People with Disabilities  
Richard L. Trumka  
AFL-CIO  
Randi Weingarten  
American Federation of Teachers  
John C. Yang  
Asian Americans Advancing Justice |  
AAJC

**President & CEO**  
Vanita Gupta

The Honorable Adam B. Schiff  
Chairman  
Permanent Select Committee on  
Intelligence  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Devin Nunes  
Ranking Member  
Permanent Select Committee on  
Intelligence  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Schiff and Ranking Member Nunes:

On behalf of The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, a coalition charged by its diverse membership of more than 220 national organizations to promote and protect the civil and human rights of all persons in the United States, and the organizations listed below, we write to support this committee's investigation<sup>1</sup> into the Trump Administration's efforts to politicize intelligence activity and its direct link to the undermining of civil and human rights. We recognize that much public attention has properly focused on the revelations that Administration officials tried to stop intelligence reports on Russian interference, and as organizations dedicated to civil rights, we strongly support this aspect of the investigation. But on the eve of former DHS appointee and whistleblower Brian Murphy's appearance before your committee, we write to ensure that you continue to maintain a sharp and sustained focus throughout this process on the attempts to cover up the extent of the threat that white supremacists pose to the national security of this country. Learning about this intelligence is a civil rights priority, will help keep our communities safe, and enable all of us to hold this and future Administrations accountable.

**Intelligence Information about White Supremacy is Critical to Keeping Our Communities Safe**

As you have noted, there is nothing political about the grave national security threat posed by white supremacists to our democracy. And as organizations privileged to work with communities targeted for hate by white supremacists, we know that there must be no barriers to accessing information that could protect our communities from the vicious hate violence that white supremacists continue to unleash across this country. Therefore, it is critical that we get more information about what intelligence was lost, minimized, or altered regarding white supremacist activity in this country. Tomorrow, when you depose whistleblower Brian Murphy, we ask that you maintain

---

<sup>1</sup> USNews, Schiff Delays Deposition of Homeland Security Whistleblower, September 20, 2020, <https://www.usnews.com/news/politics/articles/2020-09-20/schiff-delays-deposition-of-homeland-security-whistleblower>

a focus on these issues during his testimony. Mr. Murphy's whistleblower report<sup>2</sup> was supported by the recently leaked drafts of a yet to be released intelligence report<sup>3</sup> that showed that white supremacists were the most deadly threat to our national security, but included language changes as the versions progressed attempting to hide this truth and to advance falsehoods about far left groups posing an equal danger.

As a part of this investigation, we also urge you to hold a public hearing to ensure that the American people, including the people who suffer the greatest harm at the hands of white supremacist individuals and organizations, have the opportunity to learn how DHS and other Administration officials jeopardized their safety for political gain. We need this information to hold this and future Administrations accountable and protect our communities.

### **White Supremacist Violence is Killing Our Communities and Undermining Government Policy**

Communities targeted for hate on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, and disability have long known the real threat that white supremacists pose to them, their families, and friends. Our communities have lost loved ones to white supremacist violence, and live day to day under a shadow of fear that extends as long as our country's history and as far as the ongoing legacy of slavery today. Of course, our communities also know the generations of government policy and practice of simply ignoring the threat posed by white supremacists to this country's security. And independent academic institutions have documented the dangerous rise in the white supremacist threats as well. Professor Brian Levin, the Director of the Center for the Study of Hate and Extremism, testified before the House Committee on Homeland Security in September of 2019, explained, "[w]hite supremacist/far right extremists are now, the most ascendant transnational terror threat facing the homeland, in a fluid and somewhat diversifying risk matrix."<sup>4</sup>

The failure to address the threat of white supremacy has also come with an investment in policies and practices that have harmed the very same communities targeted by white supremacists. For example, federal agencies have used countering violent extremism (CVE) programs that not only failed to effectively counter violent extremism, but also targeted Black, Brown, and Muslim communities, devastating people and securitizing relationships with the very communities where we are seeing an increase in hate incidents and hate crimes. Federal agencies have had the data demonstrating the threat of white supremacy, and the time and resources to identify how to focus on and begin addressing this national security threat. But instead, this Administration has strengthened its support for CVE. A failed program lacking an evidence base, CVE programs

---

<sup>2</sup> The Department of Homeland Security Office of Inspector General, *Whistleblower Reprisal Complaint*, September 8, 2020, [https://intelligence.house.gov/uploadedfiles/murphy\\_wb\\_dhs\\_oig\\_complaint9.8.20.pdf](https://intelligence.house.gov/uploadedfiles/murphy_wb_dhs_oig_complaint9.8.20.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> Politico, *DHS draft document: White supremacists are greatest terror threat*, September 4, 2020, <https://www.politico.com/news/2020/09/04/white-supremacists-terror-threat-dhs-409236>

<sup>4</sup> Center for the Study of Hate and Extremism, *Global Terrorism: Threats to the Homeland, Part I*, September 10, 2019, [https://www.csusb.edu/sites/default/files/GLOBAL%20TERRORISM-%20cong%20BL2%2091019\\_0.pdf](https://www.csusb.edu/sites/default/files/GLOBAL%20TERRORISM-%20cong%20BL2%2091019_0.pdf)

have stigmatized religious and political beliefs as suspect, and taken valuable resources from programs that could have focused on combating white supremacist threats.

White supremacist hate is not new – it started well before our country was founded. While the pervasive threat of white supremacists is no surprise to our organizations or the people we represent, the sense of emboldenment that this President and this Administration lend to white supremacists through their open embrace of white nationalist ideology and policy is new. The whistleblower’s report describes brazen efforts to lie to the American people that demand action to address the grave threat posed by white supremacists and to make sure that future Administrations of any party understand the danger of ignoring this existential threat to our democracy. When you question Mr. Murphy about his whistleblower report, we ask that you maintain a focus on the revelations about the efforts to coverup the national security threat posed by white supremacists.

Our colleagues and community members have been in this fight against white supremacy and demanding government accountability for generations, and we are proud to continue this work. We welcome your support in this ongoing fight to expose the longstanding failure of government agencies to take the necessary action to address this grave threat to our national security<sup>5</sup>, and to use this information to demand action to protect our communities and save lives. Tomorrow and throughout your investigation, we ask that you maintain focus on the white supremacist intelligence coverup, share what information you can about the intelligence to help keep us safe, and demand accountability- both for the people who lied and directed the cover up, but also for future administrations.

Sincerely,

The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights  
America’s Voice  
Andrew Goodman Foundation  
Arab American Institute (AAI)  
Bend the Arc: Jewish Action  
Center for Disability Rights  
Center for the Study of Hate & Extremism, California State University, San Bernardino  
Cleveland Jobs with Justice  
Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights (CHIRLA)  
Demand Progress  
End Citizens United / Let America Vote Action Fund

---

<sup>5</sup> The Washington Post, *I warned of right-wing violence in 2009. Republicans Objected. I was right.*, August 21, 2017, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/posteverything/wp/2017/08/21/i-warned-of-right-wing-violence-in-2009-it-caused-an-uproar-i-was-right/>; see also <https://www.politico.com/news/2020/09/04/white-supremacists-terror-threat-dhs-409236>

Equality California  
Free Press Action  
Government Information Watch  
Hispanic Federation  
Interfaith Alliance  
Jewish Activists for Immigration Justice of Western MA  
LatinoJustice PRLDEF  
League of Women Voters of the United States  
Matthew Shepard Foundation  
Muslim Advocates  
Muslim Public Affairs Council  
NAACP  
National Association of Social Workers  
National Council of Jewish Women  
National Equality Action Team (NEAT)  
National Network for Immigrant & Refugee Rights  
National Organization for Women  
National Partnership for New Americans  
PFLAG National  
Southeast Asia Resource Action Center (SEARAC)  
Taos Immigrant Allies  
The Sikh Coalition  
Transformations CDC  
UnidosUS