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Interim President & CEO
Wade Henderson

December 9, 2021

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi and Leader McCarthy,

On behalf of The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, a coalition of more than 230 national organizations committed to promoting and protecting the civil and human rights of all persons in the United States, we write to express our serious concerns regarding the anti-Muslim bigotry displayed by Congresswomen Lauren Boebert, R. Colo., and Marjorie Taylor Greene, R. Ga. We urge you to respond to this abhorrent behavior by stripping Rep. Boebert of her committee assignments and reaffirming that such bigotry and hatred have no place in the United States Congress.

The actions of Reps. Boebert and Greene are simply unacceptable. By accusing Rep. Ilhan Omar, D. Minn., of being a terrorist and calling her a member of “the Jihad Squad,” the congresswomen perpetuated horrific and bigoted stereotypes, putting Rep. Omar and the entire American Muslim community in danger. Muslims in this country have been the targets of hate crimes and have faced disgusting attacks on their faith and loyalty for years, and this behavior is unacceptable from anyone, particularly two congresswomen who have sworn to protect and uphold the U.S. Constitution. Their attacks on a Muslim representative who is also a woman of color are vile examples of white supremacy that cannot go unaddressed.

At a time when hate crimes are on the rise, the statements of Reps. Boebert and Greene are irresponsible and dangerous. The Federal Bureau of Investigation reports that 2020 had the highest number of reported hate crimes in 20 years.¹ This behavior emboldens white supremacists, whom the Department of Homeland Security and other federal officials have called one of the top threats to our national security.² Indeed, a few days after Rep. Boebert's comments at her fundraiser were made public, Rep. Omar received a horrifying death threat

¹ Sganga, Nicole. “2020 saw highest number of reported hate crimes in two decades, updated FBI data shows.” *CBS News*. Oct. 25, 2021. <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/hate-crimes-report-2020-fbi-highest/>.

² See, e.g., Sullivan, Eileen, and Benner, Katie. “Top law enforcement officials say the biggest domestic terror threat comes from white supremacists.” *The New York Times*. June 15, 2021. <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/12/us/politics/domestic-terror-white-supremacists.html>; “Homeland Threat Assessment October 2020.” *Department of Homeland Security*. Oct. 2020. https://www.dhs.gov/sites/default/files/publications/2020_10_06_homeland-threat-assessment.pdf; Donaghue, Erin. “Racially-motivated violent extremists elevated to ‘national threat priority,’ FBI director says.” *CBS News*. Feb. 5, 2020. <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/racially-motivated-violent-extremism-isis-national-threat-priority-fbi-director-christopher-wray/>.



over voicemail.³ This type of behavior by members of Congress will continue to fuel and empower violent white supremacists. Leader McCarthy stated that he has dealt privately with these members and referred to this incident as a “disagreement whe[re] something goes astray.”⁴ These statements and incidents are not simple disagreements. They, and any future similar statements, warrant public and immediate condemnation and consequence. We urge you to strip Rep. Boebert of her committee assignments to underscore that bigotry will not be tolerated by House leadership.

Now is the time to create a shared vision for a nation as good as its ideals — one where all people are valued equally regardless of their race, ethnicity, religion, sex, disability, or socioeconomic status. In order to do this, we must reckon with and condemn, in the strongest possible terms, white supremacy and bigotry. We urge you to be vigilant in rooting out and condemning bigotry and hatred in the House of Representatives and to ensure the safety and security of all members.

Sincerely,

Wade Henderson
Interim President and CEO

Jesselyn McCurdy
Executive Vice-President for Government Affairs

³ Quinn, Allison. “Ilhan Omar Shares Chilling Death Threat Voicemail She Says She Got After Boebert’s Attack.” *The Daily Beast*. Dec. 1, 2021. <https://www.thedailybeast.com/ilhan-omar-shares-chilling-death-threat-voicemail-she-says-she-got-after-boeberts-attack>.

⁴ “GOP leader defends Rep. Lauren Boebert after her faith-based attacks on Rep. Omar.” *ABC News*. Dec. 3, 2021. <https://abcnews.go.com/Politics/video/gop-leader-defends-rep-lauren-boebert-faith-based-81542981>.