



JAPANESE AMERICAN CITIZENS LEAGUE/JACL

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JACL PRESS RELEASE

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Asian American Organizations Denounce Hearings Targeting Muslims

Statement by the Japanese American Citizens League (JACL), South Asian Americans Leading Together (SAALT), and OCA.

Washington, D.C. — Today, Representative Peter King (R-NY), Chairman of the House Homeland Security Committee, convened a hearing on "The Extent of Radicalization in the American Muslim Community." As organizations representing Japanese, South Asian, Chinese, and other Asian American constituents around the United States, we have grave concerns with the tenor and scope of the hearing. As we had anticipated, **the hearing did not produce any significant contributions to the crucial issue of national security. Rather, they continued to scapegoat a single religious community.**

As Asian Americans, we are extremely disappointed with the targeting of a particular community within the halls of Congress. Along with Asian American communities, South Asian, Arab, Sikh and Muslim Americans share a long history in this country and have played an invaluable part in building this nation. Yet our communities have also faced discrimination and alienation in America. One of the most shameful chapters in our country's history remains the Japanese American internment during World War II. Sadly, the parallels between the treatment of Japanese Americans and the backlash endured by South Asian, Arab, Sikh and Muslim Americans in the aftermath of September 11, 2001, have been drawn before, and are all the more pertinent today. To question the loyalties and beliefs of a single community simply based on religion or race divides and alienates all Americans.

We applaud Congressional members and law enforcement agencies who voiced their disagreement with Representative King's hearing. Over 50 members of Congress as well as the Congressional Asian, Black and Hispanic Caucuses sent letters to Representative King asking him to reconsider the focus of the hearing. We also commend the members of Congress present at the hearing who urged a return to constitutional values and underscored American principles of tolerance, diversity and religious freedom.

We call upon Congress to engage in an objective dialogue about national security that focuses on constructive solutions, not scapegoating and targeting of particular communities.

For more information and exclusive statements, please contact:

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