

TRI-CAUCUS: Denounces House Homeland Security Committee Chairman Peter King's hearing on "The extent of radicalization of American Muslims."

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Washington, DC – The Congressional Tri-Caucus—comprised of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, the Congressional Black Caucus and the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus— has denounced the House *Homeland Security Committee Chairman Peter King's hearing on "The extent of radicalization of American Muslims."*

“Republican leadership failed to introduce any job creating legislation since Speaker Boehner has held the gavel, and today’s *Homeland Security Committee hearing on "the extent of radicalization of American Muslims"*, makes their real priorities absolutely clear—to create division amongst the American people” said Chairman Emanuel Cleaver of the Congressional Black Caucus. “Targeting Muslim Americans goes against centuries of religious freedom in our nation, and contradicts the proud American history that many Muslim families can trace back for generations. Muslims have been a major part of this great nation since the first slave ships brought Africans here more than four centuries ago. They remain an integral part of our diverse communities across the country. In America, we are obligated to protect all citizens and their respective religions. As the conscience of the Congress, the Congressional Black Caucus, along with the Tri-Caucus, will continue to protect all citizens, providing a voice for the voiceless. This hearing invokes negative prejudices about the American Muslim community and has no place in the United States Congress.”

“I stand with the Tri-Caucus to strongly oppose Peter King’s hearing targeting American Muslims. Islam is not a terrorist organization, it is a religion. And Muslims living in the United States are not terrorists, they are Americans,” said Congresswoman Judy Chu, Chairwoman of the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus. “I am particularly concerned since 60% of all Muslims are of Asian ethnic origin. We must never forget that overblown concerns about “national security” were once used to strip 120,000 Japanese Americans of their property, possessions, and civil liberties as they were rounded up and locked away in internment camps. To this day, not a single act of espionage was ever proven. The Homeland Security Committee’s witch hunt for Muslim radicals is a “guilt-by-association” conviction in the trial of the public arena, and it reinforces negative and potentially dangerous prejudices about the American Muslim community.”

“Representative Peter King’s hearing is unfortunate and a waste of time,” said Chairman Charles A. Gonzalez of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus. “It seeks to promote a false and alarming image of the Muslim community and uses their religion as a wedge to divide them from American society. Unfortunately, his hearing is part of a trend that the Republican party has espoused. Instead of focusing on jobs or, in Mr. King’s case, real solutions to improve our national security, they seek to divide communities of color to further a political agenda that is harmful to our nation. We should all denounce the Republican tactics we are witnessing and remind Republicans that America’s strength is its diversity, and trying to undercut the very fiber of our country only serves to show how out of touch they are with our fundamental values as Americans.”

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