No. 26-10735

IN THE UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS
FOR THE ELEVENTH CIRCUIT

CAIR Foundation et al.,

Plaintiffs-Appellees,

v.

Ronald DeSantis, Governor, State of Florida,

Defendant-Appellant.

On Appeal from the United States District Court
for the Northern District of Florida
Case No. 4:25-cv-516-MW

Brief of Houses of Worship and Interfaith Groups as *Amici Curiae* Supporting Appellees and Affirmance

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CERTIFICATE OF INTERESTED PERSONS AND CORPORATE DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

Under Federal Rule of Appellate Procedure 26.1 and Eleventh Circuit Rule 26.1, I certify that the Certificate of Interested Persons filed by Appellees, ECF 39, is complete, other than the following additions:

Individuals

- Fein, Ronald
- Girard, Bradley
- Netter, Brian D.
- Snyder, Ross

Organizations

- Bend the Arc
- Franciscan Action Network
- Hindus for Human Rights
- Interfaith Alliance Foundation
- Jewish Alliance for Law and Social Action (JALSA)
- Kairos Center for Religions, Rights, and Social Justice
- Muslims for Progressive Values
- NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice
- Oklahoma Faith Network
- Pax Christi Florida

- Shoulder to Shoulder
- Sikh American Legal Defense and Education Fund (SALDEF)
- Southeast Conference of the United Church of Christ

As far as I am aware, no publicly traded company has an interest in the outcome of this appeal.

/s/ *Bradley Girard*
Bradley Girard

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INTERESTS OF THE *AMICI CURIAE*[1]

Amici curiae are 13 houses of worship and faith-based groups.[2] Many members participate in charity—work often requiring state support, access to state facilities, or collaboration with state contractors. Other members are interfaith groups working to unite communities of faith.

Amici come from various religious, political, and cultural backgrounds. Many of them disagree with one another—and Appellees—on core matters of faith and policy. But they are united by a shared opposition to the Florida executive order contested here.

This order sets a dangerous precedent on how states govern religious entities. It threatens the free exercise and association of *amici* via a regime that punishes targeted organizations and those who work with them. The sanctity of *amici*'s religious practice, success of their charitable efforts, and fidelity of their interfaith coalitions all stand to suffer as a result.

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[1] *Amici* affirm that no counsel for a party authored this brief in whole or in part and that no person other than *amici*, their members, or their counsel made a monetary contribution intended to fund the brief's preparation or submission.

[2] A full list of *amici* is attached as Appendix A.

STATEMENT OF THE ISSUE

The issue in this case is whether, under the First Amendment, a state executive can unilaterally label a religious nonprofit a "terrorist organization," cut off all state funding, and forbid any other group to materially support the nonprofit.

INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY OF THE ARGUMENT

Even before the Constitution's ratification, settlers arrived on American shores seeking refuge from religious persecution. This search was often in vain. Early colonial governments targeted unpopular religious groups, hanging adherents for heresy, barring members from public office, and expelling groups altogether from their territories. This conflict motivated the Founders to enshrine protections for religious freedom in our Constitution. The First Amendment forbids the government to infringe upon religious practice without paramount need. And pretextual reasoning—like vague allusions to "public safety"—do not clear that high bar.

Florida's Executive Order No 25-244, flouts that prohibition. App. 98-101. The Order declares Appellees a "terrorist organization." App. 100 § 1. It directs all Florida Executive and Cabinet Agencies to prevent Appellees, and "any person known to have provided material support or resources" to them, from "receiving any contract, employment funds, or other benefit or

privilege from" the state government. App. 101 § 2. There was no notice to Appellees, no legislative authorization supporting the Order, no administrative process for the designation, and no opportunity for appeal. The upshot is that if a governor simply labels a religious advocacy group a threat to public safety, the governor can stymie the group's ability to function effectively in society and associate with other groups.

The district court preliminarily enjoined the governor's "unilateral designation," finding it violated the Appellees' First Amendment rights by limiting their free expression and suppressing their association and speech. *Amici* agree, and here raise two additional points. First, the Florida Order betrays the history of the First Amendment's Religion Clauses, which responded to a history of similar persecution in the colonies. And second, the Order's precedent will harm the free exercise of religious groups across the country and the ideological spectrum, impinging upon religious practice, curtailing charitable work, and limiting interfaith association to the detriment of targeted and untargeted groups alike.

ARGUMENT

I. The Florida Order betrays the nation's history of religious freedom and burdens religious exercise.

A. The First Amendment's Religion Clauses responded to a long history of state actors targeting unpopular or disfavored religious groups.

1. Religious conflict and persecution drove the early settlement of North America. To "force loyalty to whatever religious group happened to be on top and in league with the government of a particular time," European governments "fined, cast in jail, cruelly tortured, and killed" members of religious sects in a wide-spanning era of "turmoil, civil strife, and persecutions." *Everson v. Bd. of Educ. of Ewing Twp.*, 330 U.S. 1, 8 (1947). The result, unsurprisingly, was a flight to new lands, where settlers sought freer religious practice. Jill Lepore, *These Truths: A History of the United States* 39, 43-44 (2018). Settlers established colonies with the hope of "escaping the control" of European powers, whether in the form of William Penn's Quaker refuge in the Pennsylvania province or John Winthrop's Puritan "city upon a hill" in Massachusetts. *See Hosanna-Tabor Evangelical Lutheran Church & Sch. v. EEOC*, 565 U.S. 171, 182-83 (2012); Lepore, *supra*, at 43.

But an escape from religious persecution was not easily accomplished. The "practices of the old world were transplanted to and began to thrive in

the soil of the new America." *Everson*, 330 U.S. at 9. Some of the first European settlers on American shores, French Huguenots, were slaughtered en masse by Spanish settlers who sought to eradicate "the odious Lutheran doctrine in these Provinces." Kenneth C. Davis, *America's True History of Religious Tolerance*, Smithsonian Mag. (Oct. 2010), https://perma.cc/ND2P-QAF3. And Peter Stuyvesant, the director-general of New York (then, New Amsterdam), attempted to ban Jews from the nascent colony, branding them "deceitful" and "hateful enemies." Jonathan D. Sarna, *American Judaism: A History* 39 (2019). In the English colonies, efforts at creating enclaves from European persecution quickly transformed into governments wielding their power to oppress unpopular religious groups. *Everson*, 330 U.S. at 9-10. Massachusetts whipped and hung Quakers, who were at times barred from entering the state, Gordon Harris, *Persecution of Quakers by the Puritans*, Historic Ipswich (Nov. 18, 2025), https://perma.cc/QE7R-A9LV, and portrayed them as a fundamental "threat to [the] holy commonwealth." Carla Gardina Pestana, *The City Upon a Hill Under Siege: The Puritan Perception of the Quaker Threat to Massachusetts Bay, 1656-1661*, 56 New England Q. 323, 324 (1983).[3] North Carolina's

[3] Indeed, when the Massachusetts General Court banished Roger Williams for his religious dissent, Williams founded Providence, which became a refuge of religious liberty, including for Quakers. *See* Caryn E.

constitution forbade office holders from "deny[ing] . . . the truth of the Protestant religion." *Everson*, 330 U.S. at 14 n.17. Maryland limited civil office to only Christians. *Id.* And New York banned Catholics from public office, Davis, *supra*, and required an oath and license from any "vagrant Preacher, Moravian, or disguised Papist" before they could preach or teach, *Our Lady of Guadalupe Sch. v. Morrissey-Berru*, 591 U.S. 732, 749 (2020).

2. The Constitution sought to remedy this history of persecution. *See Reynolds v. United States*, 98 U.S. 145, 163 (1878). A year before the constitutional convention, in what became the framework for the First Amendment's Religion Clauses, Thomas Jefferson warned that allowing "the civil magistrate . . . to restrain" unpopular religious beliefs was a "dangerous fallacy which at once destroys all religious liberty." An Act Establishing Religious Freedom (1786), *reprinted in* 7 The Virginia Statutes at Large 84, 85 (William Waller Hening, ed., 1823).

The Framers mirrored this thinking in the Constitution. James Madison, the Constitution's leading drafter, wrote that the "scrupulous policy" of the Constitution was to guard against "a political interference with religious affairs." *Hosanna-Tabor*, 565 U.S. at 184 (quoting Letter from James Madison to Bishop Carroll (Nov. 20, 1806), *reprinted in* 20 Records of

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Neumann, *Roger Williams*, Free Speech Ctr., Middle Tenn. State Univ. (Aug. 3, 2023), https://perma.cc/SH9S-PUTZ.

the American Catholic Historical Society 63-64 (1909)). Although all but two states at the time of drafting required religious tests for public office, Lepore, *supra*, at 138, Article VI, Clause 3 of the Constitution bars such tests for "any Office of public Trust under the United States." And the religion clauses of the First Amendment guarantee that the government can "make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof . . . ." U.S. Const. amend. I.

These clauses represented a "fervent[]" effort to "stamp out" the colonial tradition of persecution, and to "secure[] religious liberty from the invasions of the civil authority." *Everson*, 330 U.S. at 8, 15 (quoting, in part, *Watson v. Jones*, 80 U.S. (13 Wall) 679, 730 (1872)). They sought to protect religious minorities, by removing the content of free expression "from the vicissitudes of political controversy, [placing] them beyond the reach of majorities and officials." *W. Va. State Bd. of Educ. v. Barnette*, 319 U.S. 624, 638 (1943). As George Washington assured a Hebrew congregation in 1790, the new government of the United States gave "persecution no assistance," and thus "everyone," including all "the children of the stock of Abraham who dwell in this land," could "sit in safety under his own vine and fig tree and there shall be none to make him afraid." *George Washington to the Hebrew Congregation in Newport, Rhode Island, 18 August 1790*, Nat'l Archives: Founders Online, https://perma.cc/3H76-UPMX. And during the North

Carolina ratifying convention, when one member worried that without religious tests, "pagans, deists, and Mahometans might obtain office among us," James Iredell responded: "how is it possible to exclude any set of men, without taking away that principle of religious freedom which we ourselves so warmly contend for?" 5 Jonathan Elliot, *The Debates in the Several State Conventions on the Adoption of the Federal Constitution* 191-200, 208-09 (2d ed. 1888) (reprint n.d.), *available at,* The Founders' Convention, Vol. 5, Amendment I (Religion), Doc. 52, The University Chicago Press, https://perma.cc/NEV3-ANTT.

3. After the Founding, however, states still sometimes persecuted unpopular religious groups—now couching their efforts in pretextual justifications.

In the 1830s, for example, Missouri ordered all Mormons expelled from the state after land conflicts and growing popular resentment. Davis, *supra.* Missouri's Governor justified the order by arguing that the Mormons were "in the attitude of an open and avowed defiance of the laws, and of having made open war upon the people of this State," and claimed that they were "enemies" and needed to be either "exterminated or driven from the state . . . for the public good." Military Order by the Governor of Missouri (Oct. 27, 1838), *reprinted in* Facts Relative to the Expulsion of the Mormons from the State of Missouri (John P. Greene ed., 1839), https://perma.cc/227L-

PW8P. In 1862, General Grant used the pretense of preventing war speculation to issue General Orders No. 11, which expelled all "Jews, as a class" from his military district. Ulysses S. Grant, General Orders No. 11 (1862), *reprinted in* 7 *The Papers of Ulysses S. Grant* 50, 50 (John Y. Simon ed., 1979), https://tinyurl.com/cnja6fh2.

Almost a century later, following the ratification of the Fourteenth Amendment and the beginning of the incorporation of the Bill of Rights against the states, the Supreme Court made clear that such pretextual justifications do not allow targeting of disfavored religious groups. In the leadup to the Second World War, states passed laws punishing Jehovah's Witnesses for not saluting the flag and justified those laws by contending the refusal "promote[d] disloyalty," which, if allowed to spread, could have a "devastating effect upon the nation." *See* Pet'r's. Br. 19, 22, *Minersville Sch. Dist. v. Gobitis*, 310 U.S. 586 (1940), No. 690, 1940 WL 46892, at *19, *22 (Apr. 6, 1940). The Supreme Court squarely rejected that argument, concluding that the "coercive elimination" of such supposed threats amounted to the "[c]ompulsory unification of opinion," and represented the very oppression of liberty "the First Amendment . . . was designed to avoid." *Barnette*, 319 U.S. at 641.

And when states have targeted religious practice through purportedly neutral laws since, the Court has affirmed that the First Amendment

protects against "government hostility" whether it is "masked" or "overt." *See Church of Lukumi Babalu Aye, Inc. v. City of Hialeah*, 508 U.S. 520, 534 (1993). The Constitution forbids any "proposals for state intervention [that] stem from animosity to religion or distrust of its practices," even if those in power try to "disguise[]" the "mechanisms . . . designed to persecute or oppress." *Id.* at 547. And these protections hold, no matter how unfamiliar or unpopular the religious practice at question. *See, e.g.*, *id.* at 537-38 (protecting the ritualistic slaughter of animals); *Sutton v. Rasheed*, 323 F.3d 236, 252 (3d Cir. 2003) (finding the Nation of Islam to be a protected religious group under the First Amendment); *Fernandes v. Limmer*, 663 F.2d 619 (5th Cir. 1981) (overturning facially neutral regulations limiting Hare Krishna fund solicitation at airports).

4. The Florida Order ignores this constitutional mandate—ostracizing, isolating, and penalizing a religious group by simply labeling it a threat to public safety and imposing consequences based on that designation. The constitutional problems are heightened by the lack of any process to challenge this designation. Groups formally designated as foreign terrorist organizations under *federal* law are granted substantial procedural rights. *See* 8 U.S.C. §§ 1189(a)(1), (c)(14), (d)(4). In contrast, the Order here appears designed specifically to bypass Florida's statutory scheme for terrorist organizations. Its first paragraph cites Florida's definition of "terrorist

organization" at Fla. Stat. § 874.03(7). *See* App. 98. Florida Chapter 874 provides criminal penalties and civil remedies against "criminal gangs," which includes the very definition of "terrorist organizations" upon which the Order relies. *See* Fla. Stat. § 874.03(1). But tellingly, the Governor skipped these judicially enforceable provisions and jumped straight to nonjudicial punishment.

The Supreme Court has been routinely suspicious of "any process in which the Executive's factual assertions go wholly unchallenged or are simply presumed correct without any opportunity . . . to demonstrate otherwise." *Hamdi v. Rumsfeld*, 542 U.S. 507, 537 (2004). And because the process required increases with the importance of the right at stake, *see Mathews v. Eldridge*, 424 U.S. 319, 334-35 (1976), the Florida Order's burden on the paramount interest in religious exercise plainly requires more than the Governor's say-so.

B. The Florida Order sets a precedent that threatens the religious liberty of all groups, not just Appellees.

If the Order stands, the harms would extend well beyond Appellees. States could target religious groups with which they disagree. And religious groups, like *amici*, would suffer burdens on their religious exercise whether they became direct targets or not.

1. This threat affects all sides of the political and ideological spectrum. Some religious groups, including historically ostracized groups like Quakers and Jehovah's Witnesses, hold viewpoints far removed from majority religious practice or views on foreign policy—views that have made them victims of religious persecution in the past. And many religious groups and denominations have differing viewpoints on politically charged issues including: abortion, *see* David Masci, *Where Major Religious Groups Stand on Abortion*, Pew Rsch. Ctr. (June 21, 2016), https://perma.cc/6X9N-XDAQ, same-sex marriage, *see* Gregory A. Smith et al., *Religion & Views on LGBTQ Issues & Abortion*, Pew Rsch. Ctr. (Feb. 26, 2025), https://perma.cc/SHN5-E3AB, and our country's obligation to immigrants, *see* Gregory A. Smith et al., *Religion & Views on Immigration & Diversity*, Pew Rsch. Ctr. (Feb. 26, 2025), https://perma.cc/5KKF-KWJV.

These issues are politically divisive. But that does not mean a state can target groups based on their religious convictions and advocacy on the issues—no matter whether the state is explicit or pretextually relies on general interests like public safety. Yet that is precisely what the Florida Order allows.

Allowing states to bar disfavored religious groups from accessing state funding can hinder core elements of their free exercise. Take one example—charitable work. Charity is at the heart of many groups' religious practice.

See, e.g., Gordon Hardy, *Why Give? Religious Roots of Charity*, Harvard Divinity Sch. (Nov. 26, 2018), https://perma.cc/W6QK-UV4W (describing the role of charity in Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Buddhism, and Sikhism). Such charity often relies on state support, not just in Florida, but around the country, with close to two-thirds of all non-profits utilizing state or local grants to fund their activities, *see* Laura Tomasko et al., Urban Inst., *How Government Funding Disruptions Affected Nonprofits in Early 2025*, 2 (Oct. 2025), https://perma.cc/72QF-6PB7. And where charitable work is not directly supported by the state, it is often done in conjunction with other groups that rely on state resources or contract with state authorities. *See, e.g.*, HopeFlorida, https://perma.cc/GL9L-U4JM (exemplifying collaboration across charities and state agencies).

If states can limit access to state resources for disfavored political groups, like the Florida Order, they can stifle this core religious practice. For example, it would allow a governor to singlehandedly defund a Catholic charity by stating that its policy refusing to provide adoption referrals to same-sex couples threatened public wellbeing. *But see, e.g.*, *Fulton v. City of Philadelphia*, 593 U.S. 522 (2021). And it would allow a different governor to defund a religious charity that supports LGBTQ+ children by labeling the charity a threat to the state's welfare.

2. The harms would not be limited to the groups directly targeted by states. Charitable practice relies on networks of collaboration, where groups can enhance the impact of their social interventions through combined effort. When states can target religious organizations, as Florida has, members of this network can be removed at random, and the collective impact of religious charitable work is left diminished for all religious practitioners, not just those targeted.

Likewise, many religious groups, including *amici*, benefit from belonging to communities where they can meet with, discuss, and partner on projects with different religious groups. Groups that have participated in interfaith exchanges routinely record that the dialogue, relationship-building, and education that arises from the interactions have helped enhance the "central mission" of their organization and proven "invaluable" in times of adversity. *America's Growing Interfaith Infrastructure*, The Pluralism Project, Harvard Univ., https://perma.cc/46VV-XRA5. Indeed, some faiths and practitioners view interfaith dialogue as a "practical necessity" to their religion, *see Interfaith Dialogue: Christianity*, Harvard Univ.: The Pluralism Project, https://perma.cc/D5W7-YJLT, and an indispensable ingredient for sustained freedom of religion, *see* David N. Saperstein, Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom, Living Together in Peace (Sept. 21, 2016), https://perma.cc/9YB9-Z7JH.

By punishing not just Appellees, but any group that supports them in any form, the Florida Order dictates what faith groups are allowed to work together. Under a regime similar to Florida's, religious groups like *amici* can be dissuaded from working with, and enhancing their faith alongside, any organization singled out for punishment. Allowing that would burden not only the religious exercise of groups like *amici*, but their "correlative freedom to engage in group effort towards those ends" protected by the right to expressive association. *See Roberts v. U.S. Jaycees*, 468 U.S. 609, 618 (1984).

CONCLUSION

The Court should affirm the judgment of the district court.

Respectfully submitted,

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July 9, 2026

CERTIFICATE OF COMPLIANCE

In accordance with Federal Rule of Appellate Procedure 32(g)(1) and 11th Circuit Rule 28-1(l), I certify that this brief:

(i) complies with the type-volume limitation of Rule 32(a)(7)(B) and Circuit Rule 29-4 because it contains 3,040 words, which is no more than half the maximum length authorized for the principal brief including footnotes and excluding the parts of the brief exempted by Rule 32(f); and

(ii) complies with the typeface requirements of Rule 32(a)(5) and the type style requirements of Rule 32(a)(6) because it has been prepared using Microsoft Word 365, set in Century Schoolbook font in a size measuring 14 points or larger.

/s/ *Bradley Girard*
Bradley Girard

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I certify that on July 9, 2026, this brief was filed using the Court's CM/ECF system. All participants in the case are registered CM/ECF users and will be served electronically via that system.

/s/ *Bradley Girard*
Bradley Girard

APPENDIX A

LIST OF *AMICI*

Bend the Arc: Bend the Arc is the nation's leading progressive Jewish voice empowering Jewish Americans to fight for justice and equality for all and is the only national Jewish organization focused exclusively on social change in the United States. Bend the Arc mobilizes Jewish Americans beyond religious and institutional boundaries through bold leadership development, innovative civic engagement, and robust advocacy.

Franciscan Action Network: Franciscan Action Network is a nonprofit national faith-based advocacy organization. FAN brings a collective Franciscan voice to public policy issues in the United States related to justice, peace, creation, and human dignity.

Hindus for Human Rights: Hindus for Human Rights advocates for pluralism, civil and human rights in South Asia and North America, rooted in the values of our faith: shanti (peace), nyaya (justice) and satya (truth). We provide a Hindu voice of resistance to caste, Hindutva (Hindu nationalism), racism, and all forms of bigotry and oppression.

Interfaith Alliance Foundation: Interfaith Alliance Foundation is a network of people of diverse faiths and beliefs from across the country working together to build a resilient democracy and fulfill America's promise of religious freedom and civil rights not just for some, but for all.

Since its founding in 1994, Interfaith Alliance has worked tirelessly to defend the values that define this nation—values of inclusion, dignity, and the protection of each individual's right to believe as they choose. It strives to build a resilient, inclusive democracy, which respects the inherent dignity of all people, affords each person the freedoms of belief and religious practice, and guarantees that all have the opportunity to thrive.

Jewish Alliance for Law and Social Action (JALSA): The Jewish Alliance for Law and Social Action (JALSA) is a membership-based non-profit organization based in Boston working for civil rights, social and economic justice, and civil and constitutional rights at the federal, state, and local levels. JALSA has a long history of interfaith organizing and seeks a society in which all people of all religions have equitable opportunities and are equal participants.

Kairos Center: The Kairos Center for Religions, Rights, and Social Justice is a national nonprofit organization committed to building a movement to end poverty, led by the poor. Drawing on the powerful traditions of religions and human rights, the Kairos Center is a hub for movement strategy, coordination, and education among the poor across all lines of division.

Muslims for Progressive Values: Muslims for Progressive Values' mission is to inculcate a culture of human rights through public education,

advocacy, and the arts. MPV recognizes that the criminalization of dissent is the first step toward curtailing our constitutional right to free speech. Whether we approve of the views being expressed or not is irrelevant. It is fundamental to a healthy democracy.

NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice: Founded by Catholic Sisters in 1971, NETWORK is an inclusive, national, Catholic advocacy organization open to all who share our values. Grounded in Gospel values and the Catholic Social Justice tradition, NETWORK educates, organizes, and advocates for federal policies that serve the common good and honor the dignity of all. With a network of more than 99,000 justice-seekers across the country, we advocate for federal policies that help our communities thrive.

Oklahoma Faith Network: Founded in 1972, the Oklahoma Faith Network (formerly the Oklahoma Conference of Churches) was originally founded as an ecumenical coalition to provide collaborative action and advocacy around social justice issues. Our interfaith focus intensified after the OKC bombing and promoting religious tolerance and the separation of church and state became part of the fabric of our organization. We changed our name to Oklahoma Faith Network in 2022 in recognition of the growth and expansion of mission, vision, and purpose over the last 50 years. Comprised of Christian denominations, interfaith houses of worship, and community organizations, OFN amplifies the voices and efforts of people

and communities of faith for meaningful results on issues that matter. Guided by our Seven Areas of Focus, we seek to extend care, inclusion, and justice to all our neighbors, regardless of socioeconomic status, sexual identity, gender identity, race/ethnicity, country of origin, or faith tradition.

Pax Christi Florida: Pax Christi Florida works to place peacemaking, inspired by the nonviolent Jesus, at the center of the Catholic Church in Florida. We partner with Catholic parishes, communities, and agencies, and collaborate with faith-based and secular organizations that share our commitment to nonviolent peacemaking, social justice, and environmental stewardship.

Shoulder to Shoulder: The Shoulder to Shoulder Campaign, founded in 2010, is national multifaith coalition of religious communities and people of faith and goodwill who are committed to building a more pluralistic United States of America where all people, regardless of their faith or cultural background, are treated with dignity, fairness, and respect. We focus on connecting, equipping, and mobilizing people of faith and goodwill at national and local levels to better understand, counter, and prevent anti-Muslim discrimination, among other forms of religious and racial bigotry, as we work towards building a nation that lives into its promise of freedom, equality, and justice for all.

Sikh American Legal Defense and Education Fund (SALDEF): For nearly thirty years, the Sikh American Legal Defense and Education Fund (SALDEF) has worked to protect the civil rights and religious freedom of Sikh Americans and other vulnerable communities. SALDEF has a longstanding interest in ensuring that government actions do not target or discriminate against individuals or organizations based on their faith, viewpoint, or association.

Southeast Conference of the United Church of Christ: The Southeast Conference of the United Church of Christ is the regional body of the United Church of Christ within the states of Alabama, Georgia, Mississippi, South Carolina, and Tennessee (except the city of Memphis). The United Church of Christ (UCC) is a distinct and diverse community of Christians that come together as one church to join faith and action. With over 5,000 churches and nearly one million members across the U.S., the UCC serves God in the co-creation of a just and sustainable world.