Madam President, I recently joined Senator Durbin and

Senator Graham at an important Senate Judiciary Committee hearing

focused on the civil rights of American Muslims. This bipartisan

hearing was a positive statement from the committee that its members

believe strongly that all Americans enjoy the rights and freedoms

provided by our Constitution and our civil rights laws.

Today, I wanted to highlight a recent column written by the U.S.

attorney in Cleveland, OH, Steven Dettelbach, which addressed the same

subject. As one of our leading Federal prosecutors, Mr. Dettelbach is

known for protecting the people of northern Ohio by enforcing our

Federal laws. But he is also known for his wise counsel which is no

doubt why the Attorney General selected him to serve on his advisory

committee.

At the Attorney General's direction, several U.S. attorneys have been

trying to better understand the needs of American Muslims. This is a

laudable initiative, given that there have been attacks targeting the

American Muslim community in the past few years.

To make matters worse, some leaders have sought to sow fear and

divisiveness against American Muslims. Fanning the flames of hate

against those with different faith traditions runs contrary to our

American values because this Nation was founded in large part on the

importance of religious freedom.

In his April 29 piece, Mr. Dettelbach wrote,

I could not agree more.

All Americans deserve civil rights protections and the freedoms

provided in the Constitution. This does not end with the vital

protections afforded by the first amendment. It continues to ensure due

process and equal protection. It is bolstered by important civil rights

laws that we have passed to protect the practice of religion without

discrimination.

Religious freedom has long been a bipartisan issue in the Senate, but

more importantly it has been a consistent American value. American

Muslims, like all Americans, must be protected by the rule of law that

upholds these constitutional and statutory protections.

I agree with Mr. Dettelbach when he noted that,

As the President said when he announced the news that the world's No.

1 terrorist was dead, Osama bin Laden was not a Muslim leader. He had

killed scores of Muslims. I hope that in the coming days, we will not

see misguided passions lead to more attacks on American Muslims. In

order to live up to our American values we must protect all Americans

from attack. I thank the President and the Attorney General for their

unwavering leadership on civil rights issues.

I ask unanimous consent that Mr. Dettelbach's short article be

printed in the Record. I hope all Senators will read it.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in

the Record, as follows: