

From: ProjectDocumentC
Sent: Wednesday, November 25, 2020 6:28 PM
To: Ethnic Studies
Subject: [EXTERNAL] CAIR

Hello,

Please add Middle Eastern ethnic studies but please reconsider your partnership with the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) until there is accountability and change.

Our goal is to stop the nation's largest Muslim civil rights organization from being the perpetrator of civil rights abuses against some of the most vulnerable and marginalized people in our community. We are asking you to investigate and do your own research.

We have documented a pattern of discrimination and abuse inside CAIR. These incidents were brought to the attention of CAIR's leadership and members of the National Council, a national entity made up of leaders from every chapter. Instead of investigating the issues and taking serious steps to remedy them, CAIR has threatened legal action against those who speak out. This further victimizes and silences individuals.

Over 35 former employees and board members have alleged numerous issues inside CAIR, including:

- Sexual harassment, abuse, and exploitation
- Gender discrimination
- Religious discrimination (Jewish, Shia Muslim, & Christian employees)
- Retaliation; hostile work environment
- Interference with staff efforts to unionize/union busting
- Tokenism
- Board incompetence and lack of board oversight
- Financial abuse and mismanagement

There are many people who have been directly harmed by CAIR. The CAIR Sexism Documentation Project is a support group for women, and a few men, to share their experience at CAIR. SEE: <https://en-gb.facebook.com/groups/CAIRsexism/>

Despite efforts to intimidate and silence women, there have been several lawsuits against CAIR. In 2019, an employment discrimination lawsuit was filed against CAIR-California for gender discrimination. This case was settled and the CAIR-San Diego executive director is no longer employed there.

SEE: https://www.docdroid.net/FjATdM9/onlinedocument.pdf?fbclid=IwAR1uMMCaznSystmODEn10py3_qHMJsye9r4fkLKCYyecJ4dYzKVIWbbrVGI

Many believe that the CAIR board does not provide proper oversight to the organization. CAIR's national founder is also the full-time paid executive director and a voting board member. He has allegedly been a voting board member for 25+ years and does not have a term limit.

The lack of board oversight has led to some serious issues inside CAIR:

- Lost 501c3 nonprofit status for not filing 990s over several consecutive years
- A former accountant stole funds and it took him over 10 years to reimburse the organization

- Brand new SUV and monthly insurance payments for the executive director/founder/board member
- CAIR is missing three years of financial statements, there are allegations that it was destroyed intentionally
- Lack of transparency around CAIR's Washington Trust Foundation (WTF) entity receiving international donations that are funneled to CAIR. WTF allegedly owns CAIR's multimillion dollar building on Capitol Hill in Washington, DC. CAIR's executive director/founder/board member signed 990s for both CAIR and WTF and is allegedly paid by both entities.

A prominent Muslim community leader, and former CAIR-New Jersey executive director, shared his experience at CAIR: "I do not recommend donating your money to CAIR-NJ. I believe there may be a warrant out for the arrest of a former CAIR-NJ board member, who served as this organization's treasurer, for stealing CAIR-NJ money by writing himself checks. Donors should definitely question whether their charity is legitimately being used to do civil rights advocacy, how this was allowed to happen, and whether the organization is being fully transparent. Full disclosure: I am a former Executive Director of CAIR-NJ and found the board leadership to be quite inadequate and corrupt at the expense of the community and even moreso at the expense of its staff."

SEE: https://www.facebook.com/pg/CAIRNewJersey/reviews/?ref=page_internal

From 2016-2018, CAIR spent hundreds of thousands of dollars on attorney's fees to shut down staff efforts to unionize. No staff vote to unionize took place. All 7 employees who were leading the effort to unionize were either terminated or resigned. CAIR got away with union busting because the NLRB ruled that CAIR is a religious organization. Is CAIR really a religious organization or a civil rights organization?

Unfortunately, CAIR does more harm than good, whether it's the continuous negative portrayal of Muslims as victims in the media, lack of strategy, making serious mistakes on people's cases, the Muslim Ban lawsuit fiasco, the all-male press conferences, refusal to stand up for civil rights for all, lack of transparency around international funding sources and agendas, the embarrassing media spokespeople, failure to build a legitimate nationwide infrastructure, the one-person departments and offices, lack of influence on Capitol Hill despite having an office a few blocks from the U.S. Capitol, lack of community engagement nationally, and, after 26 years, not having a seat at MANY tables- including the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, which brings together 200+ national civil rights organizations. CAIR needs to stop hiding behind Islamophobia and get its act together.

Please be diligent- do your research and ask the tough questions. Is the community really helping to empower people who have been discriminated against, or are they empowering a multi-million dollar organization that discriminates against its own community and further victimizes people who seek their help? Are their donations going to pay an attorney to fight for people's rights to practice their faith or are they instead paying an attorney to suppress, silence, and intimidate other Muslims (CAIR employees) who have been treated unjustly? Are they supporting competent and principled advocates for justice or those who support the status quo and look the other way when the civil rights abuse is taking place inside their own organization?

Due to personal safety concerns and legal threats from CAIR's attorneys, our group members need to remain anonymous. Thank you for your understanding. We trust that you will do a thorough investigation into these allegations.