

In the name of God, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful



Council on American-Islamic Relations

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Dec. 9, 2025

Florida Governor Ron DeSantis
Executive Offices
400 S Monroe Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399

Dear Governor DeSantis:

I write on behalf of the Council on American-Islamic Relations, our nation's largest Muslim civil rights and advocacy organization, in response to a defamatory proclamation you issued targeting our organization on Dec. 8, 2025.

As you know, your designation has no basis in law or fact. You do not have the constitutional authority to unilaterally declare any Americans or American institutions foreign terrorist groups, nor is there any basis to level this smear against our organization.

CAIR is our nation's largest Muslim civil rights and advocacy organization, as well as a duly registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Founded in 1994, CAIR now has 25 affiliated chapters nationwide and over 500 board and staff members across the country. Our mission is to enhance the public's understanding of Islam, protect civil rights, promote justice, and empower American Muslims.

CAIR has spent 30 years vocally speaking up against all forms of bigotry, including anti-Black racism, Islamophobia, anti-Palestinian racism and antisemitism,¹ as well as all forms of unjust violence, including hate crimes, ethnic cleansing, genocide and terrorism.^{2 3}

CAIR has played a leading role in debunking the arguments of both anti-Muslim extremists and Muslim extremists who attempt to paint Islam as a religion of wanton violence.⁴ In fact, CAIR condemned terrorism so often that ISIS called for the assassination of our national director.⁵

¹ "CAIR: A Principled and Consistent Force Against Antisemitism," CAIR. 2023. <https://www.cair.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/HistoryofCAIRDefendingJewishCommunity.pdf>

² "Dispelling Rumors About CAIR," CAIR. 2009. "We unequivocally condemn all acts of terrorism, whether carried out by al-Qa'ida, the Real IRA, FARC, Hamas, ETA, or any other group designated by the U.S. Department of State as a 'Foreign Terrorist Organization.'"

³ "CAIR Reaffirms Condemnation of Oct. 7th Attacks on Civilians," Dec. 23, 2023. https://www.cair.com/press_releases/cair-reaffirms-condemnation-of-oct-7th-attacks-on-civilians

⁴ "100+ Muslim Scholars, Leaders to Issue Open Letter Refuting ISIS Ideology," CAIR. Sep. 23, 2024. https://www.cair.com/press_releases/100-muslim-scholars-leaders-to-issue-open-letter-refuting-isis-ideology

⁵ "Dispelling Rumors About CAIR," CAIR. "In 2016, CAIR's National Executive Director Nihad Awad was included in an ISIS assassination list of Muslim leaders it opposed."

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While CAIR has strongly opposed the Israeli government's violent, genocidal oppression of the Palestinian people, CAIR has shown moral consistency by speaking out against Hamas violence against Israeli civilians, from such attacks on Oct. 7th, 2023,⁶ to suicide bombings in the 1990s.⁷ This has been CAIR's principled position for 31 years.

CAIR's opposition to terrorism is not theoretical. During President Trump's first term, it was a CAIR office that repeatedly warned the FBI about the threat a troubled individual posed to the President and other Americans. After the FBI later arrested the suspect for plotting an attack on the White House, the FBI privately thanked CAIR for saving lives.

We never seek public recognition for our role in thwarting such violence and we reveal it now only to prove a point: your claim that CAIR supports terrorism is ludicrous and provably false. So is your claim that we have ties to foreign groups like Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood.

The truth is that CAIR is an American organization funded by the American people. CAIR has never been an agent, affiliate, offshoot, subsidiary, partner, funder, or representative of any foreign group. In any given year, less than one percent of donations to CAIR come from individuals based abroad, mostly in Canada.

As a former FBI official in charge of counterterrorism once said, *"Of all the groups, there is probably more suspicion about CAIR, but when you ask people for cold hard facts, you get blank stares."*⁸

The real reason anti-Muslim and anti-Palestinian politicians obsessively target CAIR and other American Muslim institutions is because of our steadfast advocacy for Palestinian rights.

Indeed, your office spent years serving the Israeli government to the detriment of Florida. You hosted your first official cabinet meeting in Israel. You diverted at least \$25 million in Florida taxpayer dollars to the Israeli government's bonds. You issued an order threatening to shut down every Florida college's pro-Palestine student groups, only to retreat when CAIR sued you in federal court. You repeatedly embraced the wanted war criminal Benjamin Netanyahu. You ignored the plight of a Florida teenager kidnapped by the Israeli military and tortured in an Israeli prison for nine months.

By now defaming CAIR-Florida with an unconstitutional proclamation and [debunked conspiracy theories](#), you have once again shown that your top priority is protecting a foreign government, not serving the people of Florida.

⁶ "CAIR Reaffirms Condemnation of Oct. 7th Attacks on Civilians," Dec. 23, 2023.

https://www.cair.com/press_releases/cair-reaffirms-condemnation-of-oct-7th-attacks-on-civilians/

⁷ <https://www.cair.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/HistoryofCAIRDefendingJewishCommunity.pdf>

⁸ The New York Times, March 14, 2007. <https://www.nytimes.com/2007/03/14/washington/14cair.html> (Government officials in Washington said they were not aware of any criminal investigation of the group. More than one described the standards used by critics to link CAIR to terrorism as akin to McCarthyism, essentially guilt by association).

We look forward to seeing you in a court of law, where facts and the law still matter. CAIR-Florida will in the meantime, God willing, continue serving the people of Florida, pursuing justice for all, and protecting the Constitution's guarantees of free speech and religious freedom.

Thank you for your attention to these important matters.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Edward Ahmed Mitchell, III". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line under the name.

Edward Ahmed Mitchell
National Deputy Director
Council on American-Islamic Relations