



Friends of Sabeel North America
P.O. Box 3192
Greenwood Village, CO 80155

Kelly Archung, Esq
Assistant U.S. Attorney
Misdemeanor Branch
555 Fourth Street, NW
Washington, DC 20530

Dear Ms. Archung,

As Washington, D.C. faith leaders, we write in support of our colleagues Taher Herzallah (2017 CMD 3046) and Kareem El-Hosseiny (2017 CMD 3186), whose cases will come before you shortly.

Both Taher and Kareem are valued partners in the interfaith and ecumenical justice efforts in which we are involved. Over several years we have come to respect the depth of commitment which they bring to non-violent justice efforts. We support their acts of public speech and protest as protected under our U.S. Constitution. As people of faith and as colleagues, we have developed trust and confidence in their work and character.

We are troubled, therefore, that out of six activists escorted out of the February 16, 2017 public Senate hearing regarding the nomination of David Friedman as ambassador to Israel, only Taher and Kareem (the two Muslims in the group) have been charged with criminal misdemeanor counts. The remaining four activists with whom Taher and Kareem engaged in almost identical behavior were (in three cases) issued small fines that day or (in one case) found the charge transferred to traffic court.

Kareem and Taher, by contrast, were charged criminally with unlawful conduct/ disrupting Congress. A review of the video from that day documents their action as no more disruptive than the actions of their allies. Therefore, we request dismissal of their criminal charges. Please do not allow the Superior Court to sustain disparate charges which suggest anti-Muslim bias.

It is important to add that our associations with Kareem and Taher reflect faith commitments held by us all, despite differences in spiritual traditions – including Jewish, Christian and Muslim expressions of faith. The justice efforts of our colleagues are truly interfaith and ecumenical in the most meaningful sense of those words. We seek your support in avoiding any unfair administration of justice which targets Muslims.

With respect,

David Finnegan-Hosey, M.Div, Dumbarton United Methodist Church

Rev. Leah Grundset Davis, Alliance of Baptists

Alex Vishio, Central Atlantic Conference - United Church of Christ

Rev. Earl Zimmerman, Daniels Run Peace Church

Rev. Michael D. Wilker, Lutheran Church of the Reformation

Cynthia Lapp, Hyattsville Mennonite Church

Rev. Stephen Price, First Baptist Church of Hyattsville

Diann Neu, Women's Alliance for Theology, Ethics and Ritual

Mary E. Hunt, Women's Alliance for Theology, Ethics and Ritual

Rev. J. Mark Davidson, Church of Reconciliation

Rev. Graylan Scott Hagler, Plymouth Congregational United Church of Christ

Merle Showers, University United Methodist Church

Rev. Robert F. Long, Retired United Methodist Pastor, Ecumenical and Interfaith Leader

Kim McDowell, University Park Church of the Brethren

Amanda Poppei, Washington Ethical Society