

**PARTISAN AND PROFITABLE:
THE SPLC'S INFLUENCE ON FEDERAL CIVIL
RIGHTS POLICY**

HEARING
BEFORE THE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE CONSTITUTION AND
LIMITED GOVERNMENT
OF THE
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PARTISAN AND PROFITABLE: THE SPLC'S INFLUENCE ON FEDERAL CIVIL RIGHTS POLICY

Tuesday, December 16, 2025

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE CONSTITUTION AND LIMITED GOVERNMENT

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

Washington, DC

The Committee met, pursuant to notice, at 2 p.m., in Room 2141, Rayburn House Office Building, the Hon. Chip Roy [Chair of the Subcommittee] presiding.

Members present: Representatives Roy, McClinton, Hageman, Grothman, Harris, Onder, Gill, Scanlon, Raskin, Cohen, Jayapal, Balint, Kamlager-Dove, and Goldman.

Also present: Representative Biggs.

Mr. ROY. The Subcommittee will come to order. Without objection, the Chair is authorized to declare a recess at any time. I welcome everyone to today's hearing on the Southern Poverty Law Center and Federal civil rights policy.

I will now recognize myself for an opening statement. Before I begin, I just want to apologize to the witnesses and for the folks in the crowd and to my colleagues that we got started a little bit late. We were dealing with some votes on the House floor. It ran long, and I apologize to the witnesses and appreciate your patience and I appreciate you all being here.

Today the Subcommittee meets to examine a troubling reality, that one of the most politically motivated, financially lucrative, and ideologically extreme nonprofits in America, the Southern Poverty Law Center, has been permitted to wield extraordinary influence over Federal civil rights policy, Federal law enforcement training, and the private sector mechanisms that increasingly dictate who is permitted to participate in civic life.

This is a far cry from the Southern Poverty Law Center's early reputation as a group engaged in concrete litigation against civil violence and the KKK. The SPLC has reinvented itself as a political fundraising machine built on an ever-expanding, ideologically defined hate mission.

Since 2000, the SPLC has published what it calls a hate map, a physical nationwide map that places bright-red markers over the approximate location of designated hate groups across America.

The map is updated annually, amplified to the media, and used by activists and even Federal agencies as if it were a neutral intelligence product.

How did we arrive at a point where a tax-exempt political organization can smear mainstream faith-based groups, parental rights advocates, even Muslims who reject terrorism, or student groups like Turning Point USA, and virtually anyone else who disagrees with its far-Left ideology as extremists, feeding these designations directly into Federal agencies, watching as violence follows, and then continuing to profit from the very fear it helps create?

This is not neutral monitoring. It is a political weapon masquerading as a public interest watchdog. SPLC leadership openly admits as such, with a spokesman stating plainly, quote, “Our aim in life is to destroy these groups, completely destroy them.” This is despite explaining that their designations are strictly ideological, not based on criminality, violence, or danger, conceding that their hate-group labels are based on opinion, not objective standards.

To illustrate just how far this mission creep has gone, the Center for Immigration and Federation for American Immigration Reform, which are groups dedicated to evaluating the effects of mass illegal and legal immigration, are labeled as hate groups by the SPLC. The SPLC’s November 2025 extremism-tracking bulletin even flagged me personally, not for violence or lawlessness or any actual threat, but for legislative work on issues like border security and concerns about radical Islamism.

A mere difference in policy opinion may land you on SPLC’s hate map that has countless groups listed over mere disagreements. Moreover, these labels have real-world consequences, including the 2012 armed attack on the Family Research Council, an attack in which the shooter admitted he selected his target directly from the SPLC hate list and used the hate map to determine FRC’s location. He then entered with 50 rounds of ammo and a bag of Chick-fil-A sandwiches he intended to smear on his victims’ faces as a political message.

Even after this attack, Federal agencies continued relying on SPLC materials, with the FBI citing SPLC classifications in at least 13 intelligence products on so-called radical traditionalist Catholics. We see the same pattern again more than a decade later, when on September 9, 2025, one day before Charlie Kirk was assassinated, the SPLC’s *Hatewatch* newsletter singled out Charlie and Turning Point USA by name, labeling them dangerous extremists.

As with FRC, in the aftermath of Charlie’s assassination, there have been no retractions, no accountability, and no acknowledgment of the risks inherent in branding mainstream political figures as existential threats. These incidents, separated by 13 years but linked by the same targeting architecture, underscore a sobering reality. The SPLC’s designations don’t merely stigmatize. They can serve as ideological permission slips for individuals already willing to commit political violence.

We must examine how Federal agencies, from the Department of Justice and FBI to the Department of Education to even elements of the Department of War, have relied on or incorporated SPLC’s briefings, training materials, or lists of so-called extremist groups.

How did we allow private organization with no objective standards and no accountability and a long history of internal corruption and bias to become embedded in Federal civil rights enforcement, determining whose speech gets chilled, whose religious exercise is punished, whose organizations are suddenly surveilled, de-banked, de-platformed, or targeted because a multimillion-dollar activist non-profit decided they were politically inconvenient?

The SPLC is just one in a sprawling ecosystem of Left-wing foundations, foreign funding streams, donor-advised networks, legacy media partners, and activist legal groups. This network deploys billions of dollars annually to shape public-facing extremism narratives, pressure corporations into policing speech, and lobby Federal agencies behind closed doors, encouraging the Federal Government to treat ideological dissent as a threat to civil rights law or domestic security.

This is a broader ideological campaign designed to narrow the boundaries of acceptable speech, to define traditional religious beliefs as dangerous, to collapse the distinction between advocacy and violence, and to shift the Federal civil rights apparatus from its original purpose of protecting equal treatment under law toward policing political dissent.

That is why this hearing is so important, because we must recognize that only a select committee equipped with subpoena authority, forensic tools, and investigative staff can follow the money, map the coordination, and expose how partisan nonprofits embedded themselves into Federal civil rights enforcement to intentionally undermine constitutional liberties, as the so-called targets of these systems are not violent extremists. They are ordinary Americans, parents, pastors, students, and community leaders expressing their values and exercising their constitutional rights.

Civil rights law was not designed to punish people for holding biblical beliefs or advocating for secure borders. The incentives for expanding these extremist categories are enormous. The SPLC now holds over \$829 million in assets, with an endowment exceeding \$738 million and tens of millions stored in offshore investment vehicles. Fear is profitable, and these organizations have built a financial model around it.

Today's hearing is a critical step to affirming a basic truth. The Constitution, not the SPLC, not wealthy donors, not activist bureaucrats, and certainly not political violence, sets the bounds of our liberty. It is our duty to defend it. It is important as we discuss this today to remember that we are here to defend and protect the First Amendment, and we are not suggesting that we shouldn't have groups that are able to exercise all their First Amendment rights and speak clearly and freely.

We are saying that we ought to, as an oversight body, be looking into the connections and the networks and how they are extended into the decisionmaking of the Federal Government and how they are being used to target average and everyday Americans. The American people have a right to know and to see and to understand it.

With that, I will now yield to the Ranking Member for her opening statement.

Ms. SCANLON. Thank you and thank you to our witnesses for appearing today.

Our Republican colleagues call this the Subcommittee on the Constitution and Limited Government. When Democrats are in charge, we call it the Subcommittee on the Constitution, Civil Rights, and Civil Liberties. It is clear from this hearing and others that have preceded it that our colleagues' idea of limited government only applies to the people and parts of our society that they agree with.

Otherwise, this administration and its allies are more than happy to use the power of government to ruthlessly intrude in Americans' lives, whether it is interfering in people's private medical decisions made between themselves, their families, and their doctors; banning children's books and censoring what history they can learn in school; or silencing people and institutions for speaking out or working for causes that Right-wing extremists disagree with, which brings us to today's hearing.

This is just the latest act in a growing assault against organizations that serve an important function in our society. While today's hearing targets one particular group, the Southern Poverty Law Center, it is part of a much larger attack than on just one liberal institution. It is part of a broader strategy by the Trump Administration and its Congressional allies to silence and intimidate civil society.

Civil society is not a concept that we have had to think about much in these United States of America because, for the most part, our leaders in government have generally respected our bedrock American values of free speech and thought and the equal and fair application of our laws, even when applied to those with whom we disagree. Civil society is a diverse range of institutions and people distinct from our government that includes nongovernment organizations, universities, cultural institutions, religious congregations, clubs, the free press, social movements, and active citizens, indivisible groups.

Civil society is a key part of our social fabric and serves all of us by providing information and opportunities for engagement, delivering important services, upholding our rights, and helping to keep our government accountable. These are organizations that Americans trust and contribute to because they support our neighbors and our communities and because they work to promote the common good and a better America.

This administration and some of its supporters have taken steps to undermine and dismantle these civic institutions to stifle dissent and consolidate power. In the words of conservative columnist David Brooks, quote,

What is happening now is not normal politics. We are seeing an assault on the fundamental institutions of our civic life, things we should all swear loyalty to, Democrat, Independent, or Republican. This is a single effort to undo the parts of civilizational order that might restrain Trump's acquisition of power.

These actions are right out of the authoritarian playbook. First, remove professional nonpartisan civil servants from key government agencies, especially watchdogs, and replace them with loyalists. Then weaponize these agencies against individuals and organi-

zations that might stand in opposition to this administration's out-of-control agenda. Use the Presidential bullhorn to undermine those who are meant to serve as a check on the administration, whether it's the press, the courts, labor unions, religious institutions, professionals like doctors, lawyers, and scientists.

Over the past year, we have seen this administration attempt to intimidate and seek retribution against elected officials who have sought to hold it accountable, as well as civil society groups such as law firms that brought cases challenging the President and his prior administration, schools and universities that it considers ideological enemies, media organizations, journalists, and comedians that have published or broadcast stories and jokes critical of this administration, public interest groups that advocate for causes and viewpoints this administration doesn't like, and nonprofits dedicated to work that runs counter to this President's political agenda.

Take, for example, the fact that late last month, the Department of Homeland Security suspended Federal funding for Catholic charities of the Rio Grande Valley. Sister Norma Pimentel, a close ally of Pope Francis, runs the organization and has been lauded worldwide for her humanitarian work with migrants, work that has put her and others who work with faith-based immigration services in the crosshairs of anti-immigrant politicians, particularly as Catholic leaders, including Pope Leo and the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, have spoken out against this administration's dehumanizing rhetoric and cruel deportation activities.

We have seen these efforts to suppress opposition to the Trump agenda aided and abetted by Republicans here in Congress. They have supported unilateral White House efforts to rescind congressionally approved funding and bully the media, law firms, universities, and nonprofits, despite their big talk about freedom, individual liberties, and yes, limited government.

Instead, we now see this administration and its Congressional allies attempting to paint ideological opponents as domestic terrorists. In September, the administration issued National Security Presidential Memorandum NSPM-7, singling out those that it would characterize as anti-American, anticapitalist, anti-Christian, or otherwise hostile toward the so-called traditional views on questions of religion and morality.

In other words, this administration and its allies are trying to redefine constitutionally protected speech against this President and his administration as domestic terrorism. This isn't a new playbook. During the McCarthy era, conservative ideologues tried to paint Martin Luther King, Jr., and other civil rights leaders as dangerous communists. It goes against everything our Constitution stands for.

In the tradition of attacks on civil society as a whole, we have seen a cottage industry of meritless conspiracy theories grow and be leveled against the SPLC and other civil rights organizations, groups that seek to ensure that all Americans are given a seat at the table regardless of race or gender or background.

Throughout its history, the SPLC has done important work to identify hate groups and extremist threats. It is exactly that work that has made the SPLC and similar groups prime targets for Right-wing forces now. Ultimately, these individual baseless accu-

sations are just a means to an end. They are part of a larger goal to weaken and delegitimize the pillars of civil society.

A strong, robust civil society provides the infrastructure we need for robust democratic self-governance. Right now, these organizations and individuals that stand up for us, the ones that people look to for protection against government oppression, are under attack by this administration and its allies. We as Americans must push back because, while today the target may be one particular group or those perceived to be part of one particular political ideology, the next day, it could easily be you or me.

Without civil society and the stability and protection these organizations provide us to counter creeping authoritarianism and Right-wing propaganda, all our rights are at risk because our fundamental rights, the freedoms and principles we hold so proudly as Americans, are only guaranteed if we stand up and defend them when they are under attack.

I yield back my time but not my defense of our Constitution, our civil rights, and liberties.

Mr. ROY. I now recognize the Ranking Member of the Full Committee, Mr. Raskin.

Mr. RASKIN. Thank you, Chair Roy.

Welcome to all our witnesses here. Lethal hate crimes are on the rise in America. We saw it at the Tree of Life synagogue. We saw it in Buffalo at the Tops supermarket. We saw it in El Paso, Texas, at Walmart. We saw it in Charleston, South Carolina, at church.

We see hate crimes every day across America. The President does not talk about extremist racial violence or White nationalism, which the Department of Homeland Security just a couple years ago defined as America's greatest domestic terror threat. The Trump Administration calls ANTIFA the most serious terrorist threat in the country, although no one can tell us where it is headquartered, who its leaders are, what its structure is, how many members it has, or what crimes it is responsible for committing.

The FBI in the last few months abruptly cut ties with the Anti-Defamation League, deliberately closing its eyes to the episodes of antisemitism that the ADL wants to bring to the attention of the country. The administration gutted the Domestic Terrorism Operations Section of the FBI, which has monitored threats by violent groups, including White nationalists.

President Trump, in fact, has a history of disturbing actions in this field. He invited over for a lavish dinner in Mar-a-Lago Nicholas Fuentes, a vicious neo-Nazi and Holocaust denier who calls for annihilation of the Jews, and self-proclaimed Hitler lover Ye.

Infamously, Donald Trump said he saw very fine people on both sides of an antisemitic riot in Charlottesville accompanying the Unite the Right rally in 2018. He saw very fine people marching down the boulevard, which led into an antisemitic riot, a confusion that has not afflicted prior Presidents like Franklin D. Roosevelt, who knew exactly which side America needs to be on when Nazis are on the march.

President Trump's immigration enforcement teams are encouraged to violate people's civil rights, arresting people solely on the basis of the language they speak or the color of their skin. The

President calls the refugees garbage. He calls the Somali American community garbage. He uses expletives to describe entire countries in Africa.

He pardoned 1,600 rioters who attacked the U.S. Capitol and our Constitution on January 6, 2021, including hundreds who pled guilty to or were convicted of violently attacking our police officers with baseball bats, steel pipes, broken furniture, and bear mace. Many of those pardoned convicts proudly carried Confederate battle flags and Nazi paraphernalia into the Capitol, and many of them, since their pardons, have gone on to commit other crimes against American citizens, like terroristic threats, home invasion, armed robbery, rape, child sex abuse material, trafficking, and so on.

Now, in other times, Democrats and Republicans alike would rely on the Southern Poverty Law Center to help us keep track of the movements of violent White supremacy in the country. The Southern Poverty Law Center has been a vigilant voice in civil society against radical White nationalist violence and extremism, neo-Nazism, and other forces across the political spectrum that spread organized hate from any quarter.

The President, however, wants to undermine civil society organizations and to reduce our ability to defend ourselves against the virus of racial violence. The administration is engaged in a full-blown assault on civil society: The nonprofits, the law firms, the universities, the independent journalists who gather information, research the White supremacist movement, and defend our freedom and our civil rights and voting rights in court. The Majority, unfortunately, now has chosen a hearing to promote its conspiracy theories about the Southern Poverty Law Center simply for exercising its First Amendment rights.

If my friend the Chair is shocked and horrified that a private group would call out hate speech and violence where it arises, how does the Chair feel about actual government officials accusing other government officials of various crimes? On November 20th, President Trump accused six Members of the House and Senate, quote, “seditious behavior from traitors. Lock them up,” when all they did was to State the uncontroversial truth the members of the Armed Forces have a duty to refuse illegal orders.

How does he feel about high-ranking Presidential aide Stephen Miller saying the Democratic Party is not a political party; it is a domestic extremist organization? Certainly, I think it is more dangerous when you have government officials engaging in speech like that.

The Southern Poverty Law Center promotes nonviolence in America, an interracial coalition, and peace. To my knowledge, there has never been a single member of the Southern Poverty Law Center in its more than five decades of existence that has ever been convicted of participating in a violent crime. It is the target of this hit job today, part of this broader attack on the not-for-profit community.

Long before the horrifying assassination of Charlie Kirk, which I have vehemently denounced, the President and his allies have targeted law firms that represent clients he doesn’t like, universities that don’t follow a line of Right-wing dogma and political correctness, and journalists who dare to report facts critical of the

Trump Administration's corruption and authoritarianism. They now simply are using Mr. Kirk's murder to engage in tactics imputing collective guilt, guilt by association, and guilt by pure invention against civil society groups that they don't like.

This past September, President Trump issues an Executive Order purporting to designate ANTIFA as a domestic terror organization even though a senior FBI official struggled just last week in testimony in Congress to explain how ANTIFA is even an organization after claiming without irony that it is the largest domestic threat facing the United States.

More than 3,000 nonprofit groups have signed an open letter asserting that the National Security Presidential Memorandum on Countering Domestic Terrorism and Organized Political violence is not about protecting Americans or defending the public interest. It's about using unchecked power to silence opposition and voices that the President disagrees with.

To put it bluntly, the Trump Justice Department seeks to redefine any kind of political dissent against him as domestic terrorism. That is a classic Orwellian and authoritarian tactic that anybody who loves freedom should reject. We must hold a hearing on the Trump Administration's attempt to criminalize political dissent in the country. Instead, we get this hearing rehashing the same old lies about the Southern Poverty Law Center.

Mr. Chair, we can do a lot better than this. We should all be working together to oppose real political violence and terror, which remain a plague on the land. We must denounce political violence across the spectrum. We should allow any civil society group to call out extremism, terrorism, fanaticism, and violence as they see it.

Today, we missed the mark a lot by targeting one group only, which has always proclaimed its fidelity to the Constitution, to civil peace, and to nonviolence in the country.

I yield back to you, Mr. Chair.

Mr. ROY. I thank the Ranking Member.

Without objection, I will introduce into the record a story by *Snopes* entitled, "No, Trump Did Not Call Neo-Nazis and White Supremacists Very Fine People."

Without objection, all other opening statements will be included in the record.

We will now introduce today's witnesses.

Mr. Tyler O'Neil. Mr. O'Neil is a Senior Editor of *The Daily Signal*, where his reporting focuses on nonprofit organizations and where he looks into and investigates the flow of dollars and the extent to which nonprofit organizations and how they're founded and how they're connected. He previously was an editor at *PJ Media* and *Fox News* and is the author of two books.

Mr. Tony Perkins. Mr. Perkins is the President of the Family Research Council, a nonprofit organization that advocates for family centered policies. He is an ordained minister and previously served as the Chair and Vice Chair of the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom. Mr. Perkins also previously served as a member of the Louisiana House of Representatives.

Mr. Andrew Sypher. Mr. Sypher is the Vice President of field operations at Turning Point USA, a nonprofit organization that advocates for fiscal responsibility, free markets, and limited govern-

ment. She oversees the organization's support of more than 2,000 high school and college chapters across the country.

Ms. Amanda Tyler. Ms. Tyler is the Executive Director of the Baptist Joint Committee for Religious Liberty, a nonprofit organization that advocates on matters of religion. She previously worked in Congress and private law practice.

We thank our witnesses for appearing today, and we will begin by swearing you in. Would you please rise and raise your right hand? Do you swear or affirm under penalty of perjury that the testimony you are about to give is true and correct to the best of your knowledge, information, and belief, so help you God?

Let the record reflect that the witnesses have answered in the affirmative. You may be seated. Please know that your written testimony will be entered into the record in its entirety, accordingly, we ask that you summarize your testimony in five minutes.

Mr. O'Neil, we will begin with you. I will remind you to turn your microphone on and stay within the five-minutes. Thank you.

STATEMENT OF TYLER O'NEIL

Mr. O'NEIL. Chair Roy and the Members of the Subcommittee, imagine that an organization notorious for comparing mainstream conservatives and Christians to the Ku Klux Klan, which inspired a literal domestic terror attack and has ties to ANTIFA, advised the Federal Government on how to counter the domestic terrorism threat.

This Orwellian nightmare isn't a hypothetical; it actually happened in the Biden Administration. It is the reason I am testifying before you today. In the next few minutes, I will explain just how biased the SPLC is, its influence in the previous administration, and why this should concern every American.

The SPLC gained its reputation by suing Ku Klux Klan groups into bankruptcy. Now it weaponizes that reputation, putting mainstream conservative and Christian groups on a hate map with Klan chapters. It uses this map to scare donors into contributing to its \$786 million endowment and to demonize its political and ideological opponents by suggesting opposition to its agenda is driven by hate.

On the hate map are moms and dads who oppose critical race theory in schools, doctors who question the grotesque transgender treatments euphemistically referred to as gender-affirming care, and even lesbians and gays who oppose drag queen story hour.

The hate map inspired a terrorist attack at the Family Research Council in Washington, DC. The man who opened fire at the congressional baseball game practice, had liked the SPLC on Facebook, and supported Bernie Sanders. The SPLC also added Turning Point USA to the hate map mere months before Charlie Kirk's assassination.

Yet, none of this led the Biden Administration to think twice about working with the SPLC. The Biden White House hosted the SPLC at least 18 times. Biden nominated an SPLC attorney to a top Federal judgeship. He touted the SPLC's help in the White House's strategy to combat antisemitism.

More disturbing, however, was the SPLC's influence on Federal law enforcement. The FBI's Richmond office cited the SPLC on rad-

ical traditional Catholic hate groups. The FBI rushed to rescind the memo when a brave whistleblower published it.

Yet, it seems the Justice Department's Civil Rights Division had no such compunction over its close ties to the SPLC. In fact, the division's head, Kristen Clarke, took a break from prosecuting pro-life protestors to meet with SPLC leaders and the staff in March 2023?

Also, when the SPLC added Moms for Liberty to the hate map in 2023, it shared an embargoed copy of the report with the civil rights division. An SPLC researcher brief DOJ prosecutors on the threat of the anti-LGBTQ movement? Why does this matter? The SPLC has suggested that merely quoting the Catechism of the Catholic Church is enough evidence of anti-LGBTQ hate to land you on the map.

For years, the SPLC defended itself from the charge of being anti-Christian by noting that it does not put every organization that upholds biblical sexual morality on the hate map. It only cited one piece of evidence for this claim: Its decision not to put Focus on the Family on the map. As it turns out, the language responding to the anti-Christian charge disappeared from the website recently, and this year, SPLC added Focus on the Family to the hate map.

The SPLC acts as the Left's ideological enforcer, narrowing the parameters of socially acceptable debate. Through the hate map, it suggests that mere disagreement with its agenda on immigration, critical race theory, or trans issues amounts to bigotry. This contributes to the hostile climate in which conservatives keep their mouths shut to avoid being accused of racism, Islamophobia, or hate.

It is no accident that activists use this hate map to deplatform conservatives or that activist groups have tried to pressure donor-advised funds to blacklist the SPLC's targets. Law enforcement should not rely on such a biased anti-Christian organization. The FBI Director Kash Patel was right to swear off this partisan smear machine.

Americans deserve to know just how much influence the SPLC had in the Biden Administration. As Chair Jordan recently noted, there is yet more to be revealed.

[The prepared statement of Mr. O'Neil follows:]

ORWELLIAN NIGHTMARE: How an Anti-Christian Smear Factory Infected Federal Law Enforcement

Partisan and Profitable: The SPLC's Influence on Federal Civil Rights Policy

Testimony before

The Subcommittee on the Constitution and Limited Government

The Committee on the Judiciary

United States House of Representatives

Tuesday, December 16, 2025

Tyler O'Neil

Author, "Making Hate Pay: The Corruption of the Southern Poverty Law Center"

ORWELLIAN NIGHTMARE: How an Anti-Christian Smear Factory Infected Federal Law Enforcement

My name is Tyler O'Neil.¹ I write and edit commentary and investigative reporting for The Daily Signal. I wrote two books, "Making Hate Pay: The Corruption of the Southern Poverty Law Center" and "The Woketopus: The Dark Money Cabal Manipulating the Federal Government." The views I express in this testimony are my own.

Chairman Roy, members of the subcommittee,

Imagine that an organization notorious for comparing mainstream conservatives and Christians to the Ku Klux Klan, which has ties to antifa and inspired a domestic terror attack, advised the federal government on how to counter "the domestic terrorism threat."

This Orwellian nightmare isn't a hypothetical. It actually happened under the Biden administration, and it's the reason I am testifying before you today.

To understand just how horrible this nightmare was, I need to explain what's wrong with the Southern Poverty Law Center.

The Southern Poverty Law Center

The organization's name evokes its beginning as a noble civil rights organization, providing legal representation to poor people in the South. To the consternation of many SPLC attorneys, the organization's co-founder, Morris Dees, turned the center's focus toward fighting the Ku Klux Klan in the 1980s.²

Americans rightly hate the Klan, as it is the quintessential hate group. Thankfully, by the 1980s, the Klan had lost nearly all its cultural force, and SPLC lawyers compared suing Klan groups into bankruptcy to "shooting fish in a barrel." As the public-interest lawyers tired of the Klan focus, Dees doubled down—because the donors loved it. The SPLC began to rake in millions by presenting itself as the primary monitor and organized opponent to the Klan.

Dees eventually ran out of grand dragons to slay, however, and the SPLC turned to ever more mainstream targets: first the racist-adjacent skinheads, then conservatives who oppose illegal immigration, then analysts who warn against radical Islam, and opponents of the LGBTQ agenda.

Now, the "hate map" that grew out of the SPLC's efforts to monitor the Klan has expanded to include an ever-more diverse cast of characters, most of them united by nothing more or less than their opposition to the SPLC's leftist agenda.

¹ The Daily Signal Institute is a charitable organization recognized as exempt under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. It is privately supported and receives no funds from any government at any level, nor does it perform any government or other contract work. The Daily Signal Institute is a broadly supported think tank in the United States. It received individual, foundation, and corporate supporters across the U.S. Members of The Daily Signal Institute staff testify as individuals discussing their own independent research. The views expressed are their own and do not reflect an institutional position of The Daily Signal Institute or its board of directors.

² O'Neil, Tyler. *Making Hate Pay: The Corruption of the Southern Poverty Law Center*. New York: Bombardier Books, 2020. pp. 23-74.

Groups of moms and dads who expressed their opposition to critical race theory and transgender ideology in schools now find themselves on a map with the Klan—a map published by the same group whose education arm, Learning for Justice, works to insert those very ideologies into the classroom.

Nonpartisan groups of doctors who band together to demand better evidence and more investigation into the grotesque transgender interventions euphemistically described as “gender-affirming care” find themselves thrust into the company of Neo-Nazis.³

In one particularly revealing case, lesbians and gays who came together to oppose transgender lessons for children and adopted the name Gays Against Groomers find themselves listed as an “anti-LGBTQ hate group,” suggesting that the group these people supposedly hate is themselves.⁴

Violence

Some conservatives mock the SPLC for examples like this, but the “hate” accusations are deadly serious. In 2012, a terrorist used the SPLC “hate map” to target the Family Research Council in Washington, D.C., aiming to kill everyone in the building and smear a Chick-fil-A sandwich in their faces. A brave building manager foiled his attack, but got wounded in the process. The shooter pleaded guilty to domestic terrorism and is serving a 25-year prison sentence.⁵

Earlier this year, the SPLC added Turning Point USA, the largest conservative grassroots youth organization in the country, to the “hate map.”⁶ A few months later, Turning Point USA’s founder, Charlie Kirk, became a free speech martyr. The man charged with his murder reportedly texted his roommate, “I had enough of his hatred. Some hate can’t be negotiated out.”⁷

The SPLC has condemned political violence, and specifically condemned both of these violent attacks, yet it has not removed the Family Research Council or Turning Point USA from the “hate map.”

The SPLC also has troubling ties to antifa, the loosely organized network of leftist agitators who have engaged in violent riots. An SPLC lawyer currently faces domestic terrorism charges for his

³ “Our Response to the Southern Poverty Law Center.” Society For Evidence-Based Gender Medicine. Sept. 10, 2025. <https://segm.org/SPLC-SFGM-Response-2025> Accessed Dec. 12, 2025.

⁴ O’Neil, Tyler. “SPLC ‘Labeled Us Anti-Ourselves’: Gays Against Groomers Founder Responds to ‘Hate Group’ Smear.” The Daily Signal. July 29, 2024. <https://www.dailysignal.com/2024/07/29/splc-labeled-us-anti-ourselves-gays-against-groomers-founder-reacts-hate-group-smear/> Accessed Dec. 12, 2025.

⁵ O’Neil, *Making Hate Pay*, pp. 121-130.

⁶ O’Neil, Tyler. “Southern Poverty Law Center Puts Largest Conservative Grassroots Youth Group on ‘Hate Map’ With Klan Chapters.” The Daily Signal. May 24, 2025. <https://www.dailysignal.com/2025/05/24/southern-poverty-law-center-puts-largest-conservative-grassroots-youth-group-hate-map-klan-chapters/> Accessed Dec. 12, 2025.

⁷ Upadhyay, Brajesh. “Read the text messages between Charlie Kirk accused and roommate.” BBC. Sept. 16, 2025. <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c99g1e0z2ero> Accessed Dec. 12, 2025.

alleged role in a Molotov cocktail riot in Atlanta, and the SPLC hired a woman described as “antifa’s secret weapon.”⁸

Making Hate Pay

While the “hate map” has inspired violence, it also likely helps pay the bills. According to its most recent Form 990, the SPLC had \$786.7 million in net assets as of Oct. 2024. The SPLC also has millions in offshore accounts.⁹ As the Capital Research Center’s Robert Stilson noted, the SPLC is wealthier than the Make-a-Wish Foundation of America, the YMCA of the USA, the Special Olympics, Chicago’s Field Museum, and many colleges and universities, including Tuskegee University.¹⁰

In 2019, amid a racial discrimination and sexual harassment scandal that led the SPLC to fire its cofounder, a former employee took to *The New Yorker* to spill the beans. He said staff knew the “hate” accusations are a “highly profitable scam” aimed at scaring donors into ponying up cash by exaggerating “hate.”¹¹

Yet the SPLC isn’t just interested in Americans’ money—it also seeks to deprive its opponents from raising their own funds.

The SPLC has served as the foundation for many debanking efforts. It teamed up with the Council on American-Islamic Relations to encourage donor-advised funds to cut off “anti-Muslim hate groups.” It released a report on “extremist finance” urging donor-advised funds to cut off “hate groups.” In 2019, the Amalgamated Foundation launched a “Hate Is Not Charitable” campaign, urging donor-advised funds to blacklist “hate groups.”¹²

For years, Amazon used the map to determine which nonprofits should be ineligible for its Amazon Smile charity donation program.¹³ Benevity, which operates charity partnerships with

⁸ O’Neil, Tyler “The Disturbing Ties Between the SPLC and Antifa.” *The Daily Signal*. Sept. 22, 2025. <https://www.dailysignal.com/2025/09/22/splc-leftist-group-targeted-turning-point-usa-has-long-carried-water-antifa/> Accessed Dec. 14, 2025.

⁹ O’Neil, Tyler. “RAISES SUSPICION: Why Does a Civil Rights Nonprofit Have Millions in Offshore Accounts?” *The Daily Signal*. July 9, 2025. <https://www.dailysignal.com/2025/07/09/poverty-nonprofit-smears-conservatives-has-millions-offshore-accounts-cayman-islands-irs-records-show/> Accessed Dec. 12, 2025.

¹⁰ Stilson, Robert. “The Southern Poverty Law Center is biased—and extraordinarily wealthy.” *The Capital Research Center*. Sept. 22, 2025. <https://capitalresearch.org/article/the-southern-poverty-law-center-is-biased-and-extraordinarily-wealthy/> Accessed Dec. 12, 2025.

¹¹ Moser, Bob. “The Reckoning of Morris Dees and the Southern Poverty Law Center.” *The New Yorker*. March 21, 2019. <https://www.newyorker.com/news/news-desk/the-reckoning-of-morris-dees-and-the-southern-poverty-law-center> Accessed Dec. 13, 2025.

¹² O’Neil, Tyler. “Group That Pushes Finance to Blacklist Conservatives Calls Debanning a ‘Conspiracy Theory.’” *The Daily Signal*. Aug. 20, 2024. <https://www.dailysignal.com/2024/08/20/group-pushes-finance-blacklist-conservatives-calls-debanning-conspiracy-theory/> Accessed Dec. 12, 2025.

¹³ O’Neil, Tyler. “Conservatives, Christians Systematically Excluded From Benefits of Christmas Shopping on Amazon.” *The Daily Signal*. Dec. 14, 2022. <https://www.dailysignal.com/2022/12/14/conservative-christians-systematically-excluded-benefits-christmas-shopping-amazon/> Accessed Dec. 12, 2025.

nearly 1,000 companies, has used the “hate map” to exclude some nonprofits from these relationships—though Benevity claims it only does so at the request of its company clients.¹⁴

In 2017, the company Vanco Payments abruptly ceased providing payment services to the Ruth Institute, an organization dedicated to helping the victims of the Sexual Revolution.

Anti-Christian Animus

The SPLC’s attack on the Ruth Institute reveals a hostility to Catholic teaching and to traditional Christian doctrine on sexuality. When justifying putting the institute on the “hate map,” the SPLC repeatedly cited as evidence of “hate” a quote *directly from the Catechism of the Catholic Church*.¹⁵ The catechism is the binding statement of faith for 1 billion Catholics across the globe.

If this claim is enough to make the Ruth Institute a “hate group,” then the SPLC should call the entire Catholic Church a “hate group.” Otherwise, it is being intellectually dishonest. If the church representing more than one eighth of the world’s population is a “hate group,” it doesn’t get much more mainstream than that.

So many critics have called the SPLC anti-Christian that the center at one point decided to clear up the “major misconception.” The SPLC claimed that it doesn’t put people on the “hate map” for holding to traditional Christian doctrine that marriage is between one man and one woman and that sex should be reserved to that context. The SPLC noted that it does not put some organization that “oppose homosexuality on strictly biblical grounds,” on the “hate map.” It presented evidence for this claim: the fact that it does not put Focus on the Family on the map.

The language supposedly clearing up the “major misconception” mysteriously disappeared from the website, however. This year, the SPLC put Focus on the Family on the “hate map,” removing all doubt about its anti-Christian position.¹⁶

R.G. Cravens, manager of research and analysis at the SPLC’s Intelligence Project, defended the decision to place Focus on the Family on the “hate map” by saying that it is “patently false” to say that “LGBTQ people can’t be truly Christian.” This flies in the face of the Bible and 2,000 years of Christian tradition, and reveals, once again, the SPLC’s animus toward conservative Christianity.¹⁷

The SPLC provides those on the Left with a useful tool to silence opposition to their agenda. LGBTQ activists can cite the “hate map” to try to deplatform their opponents and set the terms

¹⁴ O’Neil, Tyler. “Major Software Company Stops Using Leftist Smear Factory to Blacklist Conservatives.” The Daily Signal. Nov. 26, 2025. <https://www.dailysignal.com/2025/11/26/exclusive-is-corporate-america-finally-seeing-light-southern-poverty-law-center/> Accessed Dec. 12, 2025.

¹⁵ “Ruth Institute.” Southern Poverty Law Center. <https://www.splcenter.org/resources/extremist-files/ruth-institute/> Accessed Dec. 12, 2025.

¹⁶ O’Neil, Tyler. “SPLC Smears Another Christian Nonprofit.” The Wall Street Journal. June 11, 2025. <https://www.wsj.com/opinion/splc-smears-another-christian-nonprofit-focus-on-the-family-hate-map-5ce9d51e> Accessed Dec. 12, 2025.

¹⁷ O’Neil, Tyler. “SPLC Finally Clears Up ‘Major Misconception’ About Whether It Is ‘Anti-Christian.’” The Daily Signal. June 19, 2025. <https://www.dailysignal.com/2025/06/19/unmasked-splc-leftist-group-cited-fbi-outs-itself-anti-christian/> Accessed Dec. 12, 2025.

of the debate. They can close the Overton window to make it seem like the only disagreement with their ideas comes from “hate,” or “white supremacy.”

The SPLC knows what it is doing with the “hate map”: it is comparing conservatives, Christians, and many others who disagree with its agenda to the violent hate group it earned its reputation by suing into bankruptcy. The SPLC claims the “hate map” reveals the “infrastructure upholding white supremacy,” because the whole point is to judge its opponents guilty by forcibly associating them with the Ku Klux Klan.

This makes the SPLC more than just a partisan actor—it makes the group a threat to America’s free speech culture.

Yet the Biden administration welcomed the SPLC with open arms.

The Biden Administration’s Ties to the SPLC

In the fall of 2021, after President Biden took office, then-SPLC President Margaret Huang bragged in a donor meeting that many agencies in the administration had reached out to “solicit our expertise” to “help shape the policies” to “counter the domestic terrorism threat.”¹⁸

Public records requests have fleshed out the close relationship between the administration and the SPLC.

The Biden White House hosted SPLC leaders and staff at least 18 times. Dietra Trent, executive director at the White House initiative on historically black colleges and universities, met with SPLC staff on July 5, 2022.¹⁹ The FBI cited the SPLC in its notorious memo on “radical-traditional Catholics,” before rescinding the memo after a brave whistleblower published it.²⁰

President Biden nominated Nancy Abudu, an SPLC attorney, to a federal judgeship on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 11th Circuit.²¹ The White House also touted the SPLC’s role in its strategy to combat antisemitism.²²

¹⁸ O’Neil, Tyler. “ORWELLIAN NIGHTMARE: Biden Admin Consulted Anti-Christian Group for ‘Domestic Terrorism’ Strategy.” The Daily Signal. Jan. 11, 2024. <https://www.dailysignal.com/2024/01/11/exclusive-biden-admin-approached-anti-christian-splc-help-shape-policies-counter-domestic-terror-threat/> Accessed Dec. 12, 2025.

¹⁹ O’Neil, Tyler. “BREAKING: Biden Education Department Met With SPLC Before Center Put Parental Rights Groups on Its ‘Hate Map.’” The Daily Signal. Jan. 29, 2024. <https://www.dailysignal.com/2024/01/29/breaking-department-education-met-splc-center-put-parental-rights-groups-hate-map/> Accessed Dec. 12, 2025.

²⁰ O’Neil, Tyler. “BREAKING: FBI Rescinds Memo Citing Southern Poverty Law Center After Daily Signal Report.” The Daily Signal. Feb. 9, 2023. <https://www.dailysignal.com/2023/02/09/breaking-fbi-rescinds-radical-traditionalist-catholic-ideology-document-citing-southern-poverty-law-center/> Accessed Dec. 12, 2025.

²¹ “Senate Confirms Nancy Abudu to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit.” U.S. Senate Committee on the Judiciary. May 18, 2023. <https://www.judiciary.senate.gov/press/releases/senate-confirms-nancy-abudu-to-the-us-court-of-appeals-for-the-eleventh-circuit> Accessed Dec. 12, 2025.

²² O’Neil, Tyler. “DISTORTED PICTURE: Biden Antisemitism Push Celebrates CAIR, SPLC, Ignores Left-Wing Jew Hatred.” The Daily Signal. June 1, 2023. <https://www.dailysignal.com/2023/06/01/biden-touts-cair-splc-antisemitism-push-muddies-waters-israel-hours-major-jewish-holiday/> Accessed Dec. 12, 2024.

Yet the SPLC’s closest relationship in the Biden administration involved the Justice Department’s Civil Rights Division.

The Civil Rights Division

Michael Lieberman, senior policy council for hate and extremism at the SPLC, appears to have had a close relationship with Robert Moossy Jr., deputy assistant attorney general at the Civil Rights Division. Lieberman sent Moossy an embargoed copy of the SPLC’s “hate map” report for 2022—which included Moms for Liberty for the first time—in June 2023. Moossy returned the favor in December 2023, sending Lieberman an embargoed copy of the FBI’s annual hate crimes report.²³

Lieberman also took part in a “Quarterly Civil Rights Meeting” with the DOJ involving other left-leaning activist groups and Civil Rights Division leaders, suggesting regular contact with the division.

Documents also show that Kristen Clarke, the assistant attorney general for civil rights who oversaw the Civil Rights Division, solicited advice from then-SPLC President Huang, and visited the SPLC on March 6, 2023.

Documents also show that SPLC research manager R.G. Cravens spoke at a symposium for DOJ prosecutors on Nov. 7, 2023. He gave “an overview of the disturbing trends and developments within the anti-LGBTQ movement, including the surge in threats and violence against transgender people, children, and their caregivers.”

“By focusing on commonalities in rhetoric, symbols, locations, and actors involved in violent anti-LGBTQ attacks and targeted intimidation, this presentation will help investigators and prosecutors identify potential evidence and motivations for bias crime,” the description added.²⁴

What Does This Mean?

The fact that a researcher who helps develop the SPLC’s “hate map” advised prosecutors about the “anti-LGBTQ movement” should trouble Americans deeply. How much did the SPLC’s hostility toward conservative Christians cloud this presentation? Did he urge prosecutors to investigate Christian churches or nonprofits that the SPLC brands “anti-LGBTQ hate groups?”

None of this took place in a vacuum. The SPLC cultivated this close relationship with the Civil Rights Division while that very division was bringing charges against pro-life protesters—and largely ignoring the attacks of pro-abortion vandals targeting churches and pro-life pregnancy

²³ O’Neil, Tyler. “However Bad You Think Biden’s DOJ Was, New Documents Show It Was Even Worse.” The Daily Signal. Oct. 12, 2025. <https://www.dailysignal.com/2025/10/12/biden-doj-sought-direction-splc-leftist-group-that-put-turning-point-usa-hate-map-shortly-before-charlie-kirks-assassination/> Accessed Dec. 12, 2025.

²⁴ O’Neil, Tyler. “EXCLUSIVE: Anti-Christian Group Advised DOJ Prosecutors on ‘Hate Crimes,’ Docs Show.” The Daily Signal. June 16, 2023. <https://www.dailysignal.com/2025/06/16/exclusive-hate-filled-group-splc-advised-doj-prosecutors-hate-crimes-docs-show/> Accessed Dec. 12, 2025.

centers.²⁵ The Biden White House also coordinated with the National School Boards Association in a since-retracted letter comparing concerned parents to domestic terrorists.²⁶

The true extent of the SPLC's impact in the Biden administration, and in particular, at the Civil Rights Division, has yet to be revealed. Organizations like America First Legal are continuing to file public records requests to access new documents. Rep. Jim Jordan, R-Ohio, chairman of this very committee, has formally asked Attorney General Pam Bondi for all related documents.²⁷

What, exactly, did R.G. Cravens tell prosecutors about the “hatred” of conservative Christians? What sort of advice did Kristen Clarke receive from Margaret Huang? Did the Civil Rights Division investigate or take action against any organization wrongly on the “hate map?”

Did the Civil Rights Division undermine the civil rights of law-abiding Americans whose only crime was to disagree with the SPLC? Even if the SPLC's influence only amounted to advice, why did the Civil Rights Division listen in the first place?

It isn't only conservatives who should be outraged by this. Even left-leaning legal scholars like former ACLU President Nadine Strossen and Military Religious Freedom Foundation Founder Mikey Weinstein have publicly disagreed with the SPLC's decision to brand Alliance Defending Freedom, a mainstream conservative Christian law firm, a “hate group.”²⁸

Conservatives already know the SPLC lacks credibility, but we need to do a better job of alerting the American people. A recent YouGov poll found that, while Republicans view the SPLC negatively (giving it a -19% favorability rating), U.S. adults are more likely to view the SPLC favorably, at 8%, and Democrats gave the group a 39% favorability rating.²⁹

I believe the SPLC has every right to stand up for what it believes in, but it does not have the right to systematically defame mainstream conservatives, Christians, and others by trying to remove them from polite society by falsely comparing them to the Ku Klux Klan. FBI Director Kash Patel was right to call the SPLC a “partisan smear machine,” and any use of the SPLC's “hate map” is a black mark on our government's record.

²⁵ O'Neil, Tyler. “Trump's Pardons for Pro-Life Protesters Rights the Wrongs of the Woketopus.” RealClearPolicy. Jan. 25, 2025.

https://www.realclearpolicy.com/articles/2025/01/25/trumps_pardons_for_pro-life_protesters_rights_the_wrongs_of_the_woketopus_1087147.html Accessed Dec. 12, 2025.

²⁶ “NSBA Announces Completion of Independent Review; Takes Action Based on Findings.” The National School Boards Association. May 20, 2022. Archived May 31, 2022.

<https://web.archive.org/web/20220531004619/https://nsba.org/news/2022/independent-review> Accessed Dec. 12, 2025.

²⁷ O'Neil, Tyler. “EXCLUSIVE: Just How Closely Did Biden's DOJ Rely on the SPLC? Jim Jordan Is on the Case.” The Daily Signal. Nov. 25, 2025. <https://www.dailysignal.com/2025/11/25/just-how-closely-did-bidens-doj-rely-on-the-splc-jim-jordan-is-on-the-case/> Accessed Dec. 12, 2025.

²⁸ “Setting the Record Straight.” Alliance Defending Freedom. <https://adflegal.org/setting-the-record-straight/> Accessed Dec. 12, 2025.

²⁹ Ballard, Jamie. “What Americans think about 20 political, activist, and extremist groups.” YouGov. Nov. 7, 2025. <https://today.yougov.com/politics/articles/53347-what-americans-think-about-20-political-activist-and-extremist-groups> Accessed Dec. 12, 2025.

Mr. ROY. Thank you for your testimony, Mr. O'Neil.

Mr. Perkins, you now have five minutes. Reminding you to turn your microphone on.

STATEMENT OF TONY PERKINS

Mr. PERKINS. Chair Roy and the Members of the Subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to testify today.

On August 15, 2012, our organization experienced firsthand what happens when inflammatory rhetoric is legitimized by respected institutions. That morning, an armed LGBTQ activist named Floyd Corkins entered FRC's headquarters with a loaded semiautomatic pistol, nearly 100 rounds of ammunition, and 15 Chick-fil-A sandwiches.

He later admitted to the FBI that his intention was to kill the people in the building and stuff the sandwiches into his victims' mouths as a political statement. Corkins is the first person convicted under the District's post-9/11 terrorism statute. When the FBI asked him why he chose FRC, he told them plainly, "he found us via the Southern Poverty Law Center's hate map."

Two years earlier, FRC became the first mainstream Christian public policy organization labeled a hate group by the SPLC. The SPLC not only placed us on a list, but they also published an interactive map pinpointing our location, doxxing us and making us a target.

Despite appeals after the shooting, the SPLC refused to remove us from their map. To the SPLC, the life-threatening gunshot suffered by our African American building manager, Leo Johnson, was little more than collateral damage, acceptable if it intimidated Christians who uphold biblical teaching on marriage and human sexuality.

As was stated, once upon a time, SPLC did legitimate civil rights work. Today, even former SPLC insiders have acknowledged the organization's internal ethical failures and ideological turn. The SPLC is an activist advocacy organization that, to use a sports analogy, is not only a player, but they blow the whistle, call the penalties, claiming authority to decide who may speak while actively shaping the political fight themselves.

Their hate map isn't research. It is a political weapon aimed at silencing viewpoints that the Left opposes. The legacy media is a silent partner with them. When FRC was added to the list, a Soros-funded group immediately demanded *MSNBC* and Chris Matthews ban me from appearing on *Hardball*. Within days, the SPLC label functioned like a verdict, treated as an unquestionable fact without investigation or accountability. The result is the silencing of conservative voices.

More troubling, government agencies have used SPLC materials to shape training and threat assessments. The Department of Defense previously used SPLC materials in trainings that cast suspicion on Christian organizations. Local law enforcement agencies circulate SPLC lists as though they were intelligence bulletins. Schools have incorporated SPLC's material into curriculum, presented to children as objective fact. Major corporations, from online platforms to payment processors, have used SPLC's label to deny

services, restrict donations, and cutoff basic financial tools to Americans.

Once a group is branded, the SPLC label functions like a digital scarlet letter, deployed to restrict speech, marginalize, and financially ruin individuals and organizations. This is precisely the SPLC's intent, not to fight violence, but to silence political and cultural opponents one way or another.

Labeling is not without consequence. The SPLC's agitation propaganda has inspired more than one act of violence. In 2017, Congressman Steve Scalise was shot and nearly killed by a man immersed in SPLC online ecosystem that relentlessly demonized conservatives. Prior to the shooting, the SPLC had called for Steve to be removed from his GOP leadership position.

Following this pattern, earlier this year, after months of SPLC targeting, Charlie Kirk was assassinated in an environment supercharged by ideological hostility toward social conservatives. The SPLC and other groups in this Left-wing ecosystem create an environment ripe for terrorism, a form of terrorism in which influential public figures and media outlets use incendiary but deniable rhetoric to incite anonymous ideologically aligned individual to commit unpredictable and often violent acts.

The government, the media, and corporations should not facilitate an organization that characterizes law-abiding citizens in a way that suggests violence against them is justified. The SPLC refuses to acknowledge its role in fueling this hostility. Denial does not erase responsibility.

If the SPLC is truly committed to reducing hate, then they should drop the gun, take down the hate map, and stop feeding the dynamic that pushes unstable individuals toward violence.

In conclusion, Mr. Chair, just after midnight on August 15, 2012, I stood in the hospital waiting for our wounded building manager to emerge from a long and complicated surgery. When he did, I went into the recovery room to see him and to pray with him.

Then, I asked him the same question that the FBI agent asked when we were reviewing the video footage of the shooting. I said, "Leo, this question has been swirling in my mind all day. Why did you not shoot Corkins when you had taken his gun and you had it trained on him as you were bleeding and about to lose consciousness?" Leo said, "Because God told me not to."

That kind of restraint, the belief that life is sacred, is what the SPLC refuses to acknowledge in the very people it labels as dangerous. If we want a freer, safer, and more just society, we must reject the SPLC's practice of ideological blacklisting and ensure the government agencies, media outlets, corporations, and schools stop outsourcing moral judgment to an organization that has long abandoned neutrality and morality.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Perkins follows:]



**Written Testimony of Tony Perkins
President, Family Research Council**

**Before the U.S. House Judiciary Subcommittee on the Constitution and Limited Gov't
"Partisan and Profitable: The SPLC's Influence on Federal Civil Rights Policy"**

December 16, 2025

Chairman Roy, Ranking Member Scanlon, and Members of the Subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to testify today.

My name is Tony Perkins, and I serve as president of Family Research Council (FRC) in Washington, D.C., a position that I have held since 2003.

On August 15, 2012, Floyd Corkins, an LGBTQ activist, entered FRC's headquarters in Washington, D.C., with a loaded semi-automatic pistol, 95 rounds of ammunition, and 15 Chick-fil-A sandwiches. In a recorded interview with the FBI, Corkins revealed that he had intended to "kill the people in the building" and smear Chick-fil-A sandwiches in their faces. Corkins described himself as a political activist who wanted to kill "as many people as [he] could."

Corkins brought the sandwiches along because, in his words: "Chick-fil-A came out against gay marriage so I was going to use that as a statement."¹ This would-be murderer was the first person convicted for an act of terrorism under the District's post-9-11 terrorism statute.

This hideous crime, in which FRC's building manager, Leo Johnson, was shot as he stopped the terrorist, is linked to the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC). Two years prior, Family Research Council became the first Christian conservative public policy organization to be labeled by the SPLC as a hate group. That list is reposted annually along with a "hate map" that doxes all those listed by showing their geographical locations.

Corkins also told the FBI that he learned of FRC through the SPLC website. Despite its connection to the attempted mass murder, and requests from FRC to remove FRC from the list, the SPLC has refused to acknowledge the link between its listing of FRC and this shooting or remove FRC from the "hate map" to this day. As for Leo Johnson, to people at the SPLC, our co-worker's life-threatening gunshot was mere collateral damage—a small price to pay if his

¹ Department of Justice, "Virginia Man Sentenced To 25 Years In Prison In Shooting Of Security Guard At Family Research Council Defendant Targeted Organization In Planned Attack," press release, Sept. 19, 2013, <https://www.justice.gov/usao-dc/pr/virginia-man-sentenced-25-years-prison-shooting-security-guard-family-research>.

example intimidated other Christians like us into silence about what the Bible says about marriage and human sexuality.

History and Trajectory of the SPLC

It was not always this way. The SPLC was founded in 1971 to advance civil rights litigation in the Deep South, but it has since evolved into an organization that has sadly lost its way, more recently engaging in Marxist and critical theory analysis to frame its own intolerance and opposition to its alternate political perspectives on the right. Also ironically, this strategy is self-defeating for the SPLC's stated aim. By labelling and marginalizing its political opponents, the SPLC is feeding the very monster it claims to want to fight. When groups and their constituents are marginalized from discourse, they will only grow more radicalized.

All of this begs the question: does the SPLC actually want to help solve the problems it says it does and bring constructive solutions? Or does it want to promote problems to justify its existence and generate financial resources? As of October 24, the SPLC had \$738.4 million in endowment funds.²

Examining the SPLC's sad detour from civil rights defense into critical theory policeman, we see it putting much of its effort into tracking and publicizing what it calls "hate groups" on its "hate map." It also maintains and publicizes a separate "hate watch" site, and something called the "extremist files." Multiple listings contain the same groups and categories of political thought that the SPLC is opposing.

The incoherence of this must be noted. Groups and individuals are on multiple lists. Is one "hateful." Or an "extremist"? Is one able to avoid the "hate map" by avoiding certain public activities, yet harboring hatred and rage in their heart? If so, why is "hate" the proper label?

Again, it is fair for one to ask whether the real goal of the SPLC is eradicating "hate" (however that is done), or to perpetuate its existence as an organization and aid the advancement of the Left's destabilizing agenda by using their labeling to intimidate and silence.

The SPLC Is Used to Marginalize Opponents in the Eyes of Government and Media

Aside from being referenced by radicalized "lone wolf" killers and would-be killers, how is this "hate map" formally used by the government and media?

It is used by media and activists to marginalize their opponents in public debate. When FRC was placed on the SPLC list in 2010, it was immediately taken by a George Soros-funded organization, Faithful America, to start a public campaign demanding MSNBC and Chris

² Southern Poverty Law Center, Inc., Consolidated Financial Statements, October 31, 2024.

Matthews remove me from regular appearances from the show Hardball. Their listing is not done in a vacuum; it is designed to silence—one way or another.

While the media is used to silence opponents, government entities are utilized to do even worse.

Government agencies and major corporations have used the SPLC's hate and extremist labeling and related material:

- 1) The SPLC has **worked closely with federal government**, including training Biden DOJ prosecutors.³ Thankfully, under President Trump, the FBI has cut ties with the SPLC.⁴ All government agencies should follow suit.
- 2) The SPLC touts its own work **influencing local law enforcement**, as shown in one instance with the Chicago Police Department.⁵
- 3) The SPLC's Learning for Justice resources, previously entitled Teaching Tolerance, are **widely distributed to public schools**,⁶ with an associated magazine being sent to 450,000 educators twice a year.⁷
- 4) **Several corporations** have utilized SPLC's labeling to deny donations and business services to labeled organizations. Amazon has used the SPLC as a resource for who is eligible under its AmazonSmile program.⁸ Others that have relied on the SPLC include Spotify,⁹ GuideStar,¹⁰ PayPal, Alphabet, Mastercard, Amazon, Meta, Salesforce and Starbucks.¹¹

The efforts within government and public agencies are designed to marginalize those who will not bow to the Left's radical cultural agenda by stigmatizing them in the eyes of authorities and

³ Josh Christenson, "SPLC helped train Biden's DOJ prosecutors, had exclusive access to hate crimes data: bombshell records," *NY Post*, Oct. 3, 2025, <https://nypost.com/2025/10/03/us-news/splc-helped-train-doj-prosecutors-under-biden-had-exclusive-access-to-hate-crimes-data-bombshell-records-show/#~text=14%2C202022%2C%20meeting%20with%20high%2Drinking%20DQ%20officials.Monaco%20and%20Associate%20Attorney%20General%20Vanita%20Gupta>.

⁴ Bryan Chai, "The FBI—Finally—Kicks the SPLC to the Curb," *Alliance Defending Freedom*, Oct. 14, 2025, <https://adfdigital.org/article/the-fbi-finally-kicks-the-splc-to-the-curb/>.

⁵ Michael Lieberman, "Countering Hate & Extremism Through Policy & Data," *SPLC*, June 4, 2024, <https://www.splcenter.org/resources/reports/countering-hate-extremism-policy-data/#~text=The%20Minnesota%20Board%20of%20Peace%20Illustration%20by%20McQuade%20Inc>.

⁶ Meg Kilmannon, The SPLC's Radical "Learning for Justice" Program, *Family Research Council*, 2021, <https://www.frc.org/booklet/the-splcs-radical-learning-for-justice-program#gsc.tab=0>.

⁷ Zinn Education Project, accessed Dec. 15, 2025, <https://www.zinnedproject.org/materials/learning-for-justice/#~text=Founded%20in%201991%20by%20the%20free%20videos%20for%20the%20classroom>.

⁸ SPLC denounced as "thoroughly disgraced" after labeling pro-life, family organizations as "hate groups," *Catholic Telegraph*, Feb. 3, 2021, <https://www.thecatholictelegraph.com/pro-life-family-organizations-hate-groups/72488>.

⁹ Jessica Yarvin, "These tech companies are purging white supremacist groups from their platforms," *PBS News*, Aug. 18, 2017, <https://www.pbs.org/news-hour/nation/tech-companies-purging-white-supremacist-groups-platforms/>.

¹⁰ "GuideStar, website about charities, flags dozens of nonprofits as hate groups," *CBS News*, June 8, 2017, <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/guidestar-charity-website-flags-nonprofits-hate-groups/>.

¹¹ Allen Mendenhall, "Turning the Tables on the SPLC," *Heritage Foundation*, Nov. 5, 2025, <https://www.heritage.org/progressivism/commentary/turning-the-tables-the-splc>.

poisoning the minds of children with their intolerance. And it is used to perpetuate and extend their cultural reach by laundering their blatantly biased agenda to silence the political and cultural opponents of the Left.

Who is listed on the SPLC's websites? Ordinary people and groups with unpopular opinions. They are characterized as "haters," "bigots," "Islamophobes," and "racists." Good people who have never professed racist or other hateful beliefs are lumped together with those who have. The SPLC attempts to paint the whole group with the same brush, but upon examination, this charade is easily seen through.

Who else is listed? Public figures with whom it has policy disagreements—Ayaan Hirsi Ali ("Anti-Muslim Extremist"), David Horowitz ("Anti-Muslim Extremist"), and Charlie Kirk.

Who else? Organizations with whom it has public policy disagreements—groups like Alliance Defending Freedom, Focus on the Family, Moms for Liberty, D. James Kennedy Ministries, and TPUSA.

Who isn't a "hate group"? Here are some not listed: known radical Islamist organizations or mosques; the Council on American Islamic Relations; Students for Justice in Palestine; radical, violent environmentalist groups; black nationalist groups; and ANTIFA (and related anarchist groups).

There are groups *not* listed on the SPLC's Hate Map that *have* been linked to violence: Jane's Revenge, Earth Liberation Front, John Brown Gun Club, and Forest Defenders. Why not put them on the "hate map"?

Renowned African American neurosurgeon and politician Ben Carson was placed on the SPLC's "extremist files" before being removed after immediate backlash. In the SPLC's own statement on its removal of Dr. Carson, what prompted it to review this classification was the "intense criticism" it came under, not the merit of the classification itself. Yet the SPLC could not let the matter rest. In discussing what it found "extreme" about Ben Carson, the first piece of evidence listed was Dr. Carson's words that "marriage is between a man and a woman."¹²

This should put to rest the idea that the SPLC is only interested in tracking truly violent and extreme groups. It is not; instead, it is interested in silencing their political opponents, one way or another.

The SPLC and Violence

In 50 years, the SPLC has become extremely adept at targeting its opponents with defamatory agitation propaganda. The "hate list" and "hate map" are designed to ostracize, shame, and dox.

¹² SPLC Statement on Dr. Ben Carson, https://www.splcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/files/d6_legacy_files/downloads/publication/sclc-statement-carson.pdf.

They are designed to censor opposition speech and expression, and if necessary, to serve as a basis and justification to deploy “direct action” (a term of art for violence).

The SPLC and other groups in the left-wing ecosystem create an environment ripe for “stochastic terrorism,” a form of terrorism in which influential public figures and media outlets use incendiary, but deniable, rhetoric to incite anonymous, ideologically aligned individuals to commit unpredictable and often violent acts.

The SPLC’s targeting of its opponents has helped create an environment fueled by agitation-inducing propaganda leading to violence. The SPLC specializes in communicating via agitation propaganda, a method of manipulating emotions, which causes people to take action. The SPLC’s messaging is meant to ostracize and demonize opponents, intimidate them into silent compliance, and if violence follows—in their minds—so be it.

This downstream violence has happened to others besides FRC. It is a feature, not a bug, of the messaging.

On June 14, 2017, GOP House Majority Leader Steve Scalise was shot and critically wounded by a politically agitated activist, Roy T. Hodgkinson, who had “liked” the SPLC on Facebook. Scalise was shot along with dozens of other Republican senators and House members at a baseball diamond in Alexandria, Virginia. He required multiple surgeries and almost died from his wounds, and hundreds of bullet fragments remain in his body. His shooter, Hodgkinson, was immersed in the online waters of agitation propaganda created by the SPLC and other leftist groups targeting conservatives and Trump supporters.

SPLC and TPUSA

The SPLC’s role in producing the climate of hatred of social conservatives and the things they stand for is exhibited in its recent targeting of Turning Point USA, which was added to the SPLC “hate map” in May 2025. That same month, the SPLC released “The Year in Hate and Extremism 2024,” to include a section called “Turning Point USA: A case study of the hard right in 2024.” This report targeted Charlie Kirk and TPUSA. Tragically, later that same year, on September 10, 2025, Kirk was shot and killed.

The political Left has been only too happy to use the SPLC as its attack dog, hiding behind its agitation propaganda as it nudges the violence to occur under a blanket of plausible deniability. Well, what may have been plausible before is no longer. SPLC’s pattern of silencing one way or another is like latent fingerprints at the scene of a crime.

The media, government agencies, and corporate entities must cease aiding and abetting the SPLC conspiracy to silence at any cost.

The SPLC's Affiliation with ANTIFA

Despite its attempt to frame its activity as academic and legitimate, the SPLC is instead bolstering vigilante anarcho-communists. Its affiliation with Megan Squire is one prominent example. Squire is a former professor at Elon University in North Carolina, who subsequently served as the SPLC's Deputy Director for Data Analytics and Open-Source Intelligence (OSINT) from March 2022 to March 2025.¹³ A data science researcher and expert in cyber security and database management, Squire shared her “intelligence” with ANTIFA cells and others.

ANTIFA is a militarist, anarchist enterprise that explicitly calls for the overthrow of the United States government, law enforcement authorities, and our system of law. It uses illegal means to organize and execute a campaign of violence and terrorism nationwide to accomplish these goals.

ANTIFA is only one part of a nefarious web of drug cartels, human traffickers, their financiers, associated non-governmental organizations, designated foreign terrorist organizations, and designated domestic terrorist organizations.

On September 22, 2025, President Trump designated ANTIFA a “domestic terror organization.” Three days later, the president issued National Security Presidential Memorandum 7 (NSPM/7), titled “Countering Domestic Terrorism and Organized Political Violence.”¹⁴

NSPM/7 recognized that “[t]his political violence is not a series of isolated incidents and does not emerge organically. Instead, it is a culmination of sophisticated, organized campaigns of targeted intimidation, radicalization, threats, and violence designed to silence opposing speech, limit political activity, change or direct policy outcomes, and prevent the functioning of a democratic society.” Thus, “[a] new law enforcement strategy that investigates all participants in these criminal and terroristic conspiracies — including the organized structures, networks, entities, organizations, funding sources, and predicate actions behind them — is required.”

It further recognized that “[t]hese campaigns often begin by **isolating and dehumanizing specific targets to justify murder or other violent action against them**. They do so through a variety of fora, including anonymous chat forums, in-person meetings, social media, and even educational institutions.” After that, “[t]hese campaigns then escalate to organized doxing, where the private or identifying information of their targets (such as home addresses, phone numbers, or other personal information) is exposed to the public with the explicit intent of encouraging others to harass, intimidate, or violently assault them.”

¹³ Doug Bock Clark, “Meet Antifa’s Secret Weapon Against Far-Right Extremists,” WIRED, Jan. 16, 2018, <https://www.wired.com/story/free-speech-issue-antifa-data-mining/>. In the article, Squire admitted that she had become a communist activist.

¹⁴ Executive Order: Countering Domestic Terrorism and Organized Political Violence, Sept. 25, 2025, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/09/countering-domestic-terrorism-and-organized-political-violence/>.

Importantly, “[t]hese campaigns are coordinated and perpetrated by actors who have developed a comprehensive strategy to achieve specific policy goals **through radicalization and violent intimidation.**”

The Way Ahead

We must also stop characterizing people in a way that dehumanizes them and sends the message that it is okay to attack or kill them.

The SPLC’s refusal to acknowledge its role in contributing to the violence taking place in our nation does not change the fact that it is involved.

To that denial, I would say: Take down the hate map and associated posts. If their goal is to stop the hate and violence—then I would say: drop the gun—take down the list.

The cost of further incitement to violence far outweighs any cost in taking down their money-making list.

When groups are marginalized to the edges of society by being excluded from debate, it results in the disenfranchisement of those groups and the people they represent. This does not help heal division in our land; it exacerbates it.

Such legitimization of *marginalization* by both the government and media is a recipe for disaster.

You can be sure the energy, thoughts, feelings, and views of people being silenced will be channeled somewhere. Given the Bible’s moral teachings, it is unlikely that Bible-believing Christians are going to resort to mass violence, but what about those who do not have a moral code? And not everyone walking under the banner of Christianity is following the Scripture’s teachings.

Marginalization is not a recipe for healing our land. It is a recipe for further poisoning the well. We should seek to engage in dialogue, in public dialogue, in discussions—and yes, in disagreement—over how to move our nation forward. This “coming together” dialogue is the only way for our nation to survive.

We must also reflect on the fact that information like the SPLC’s “hate map” not only fails to provide a constructive solution for the traumas our society is facing but also compounds and worsens them. Instead of offering Floyd Corkins a resource to help him heal his wounds, it offers him a supposedly legitimate justification for taking out his internal anger by trying to take the lives of those around him.

This cycle has been repeated, most recently in the death of Charlie Kirk.

Conclusion

This issue is not new. The topic of the SPLC's demonization of its opponents has been raised before Congress multiple times. Our organization has briefed government leaders on this issue numerous times.

The U.S. government should cease using the SPLC for any reason, and the media should stop referring to it as a supposedly neutral source of information. It is not neutral; rather, it seeks to marginalize and silence its political opponents.

Corporate leaders should cease aiding SPLC's agenda by using their lists, and the thousands of public schools SPLC claims are using their intolerant propaganda should stop poisoning the minds of children—parents should demand it.

Let me be clear. I support the SPLC's right to its opinions, as wrong as they may be. I am not going to create an un-American list and put SPLC's Alabama address on a map. I don't want anyone going by their office, unless it is to pray for them. Violence against our political opponents is not the answer for our country—now or at any time.

Near midnight on August 15, 2012, I stood in the hospital waiting for our wounded building manager Leo Johnson to emerge from a long and complicated surgery. When he did, I went into the recovery room to see him and pray with him. Then I asked Leo a question that had swirled in my mind all day: Why did you not shoot Corkins when you had taken his gun and had it trained on him as you were bleeding? Leo said, "Because God told me not to."

May we all exhibit such grace and obedience to the voice of God, who alone has the authority to give and take life. When we all understand that, then we will have a freer and more just society.

Mr. ROY. Thank you, Mr. Perkins. I appreciate that testimony. We will give Ms. Tyler some grace on her time as well. Feel free to use the time as needed.

Mr. Sypher, you now have five minutes. Reminding you to turn your microphone on. Right before you begin, I do want to say this. Obviously, all of us were horrified about what happened to Charlie in September. I can't believe it has been three months. I know that given your responsibilities in dealing with university chapters that you were physically present on the scene. Just know that we are praying for you, for Charlie's family, for the entire, Mr. Perkins, USA family, and appreciate your willingness to be here.

You are now recognized for five minutes.

STATEMENT OF ANDREW SYPHER

Mr. SYPHER. Thank you, Mr. Chair. Good afternoon, Mr. Chair and the Members of the Committee. My name is Andrew Sypher, and I am the Executive Vice President of Field Operations for Turning Point USA.

In my many years leading our operations, I have overseen the chapter growth at colleges and high schools, building the largest campus chapter organization in the country. I have also managed our campus events, including Charlie Kirk's "Prove Me Wrong," tables or his passion for open dialog with disagreeing students that made him a social media giant, reaching millions of young people through tough, humanizing conversations.

Over the years, Charlie and Turning Point have been attacked by groups like the Southern Poverty Law Center, which villainizes our open-dialog approach on campuses. The SPLC hastily labels ideologically opposing organizations as hate groups, misleading well-intentioned entities and blurring the line between real hate and mere differences of opinion.

Charlie warned just before his murder that the SPLC's hate map designation equating campus kids who promote the Constitution, the Bill of Rights, and prolife, profamily values with the KKK and neo-Nazis would put Turning Point in the crosshairs. This proved prophetic. Just months later, an assassin took Charlie Kirk's life on campus during one of those open-dialog events that often lowered tensions and fostered healthy debate among young people.

Charlie embodied what made America great: Free speech. Students flocked to these exchanges, not just for entertainment, but to witness how conversations labeled triggering or hateful by the Left could humanize even the toughest of opponents.

This is the work we continue in Charlie's legacy. We reject the idea that more speech is hate speech. Hate festers when institutions shut down dialog, creating divides and equating ordinary Americans with home-grown terrorism, what we call the coddling of the American mind.

We have seen this animosity firsthand. I was standing just ten feet to his left when Charlie was assassinated at Utah Valley University, an act later condoned and justified by some of the very people who labeled him and Turning Point a hate group.

At places like Berkeley, where we recently held a prescheduled event, violent protestors gathered and injured civilians. This mirrors years of organized protests involving groups like ANTIFA

breaking doors, destroying property, setting fires, and intimidating our attendees.

Since Charlie's death, political violence against conservatives has only risen. I urge this Committee to act decisively. We cannot allow biased organizations like the SPLC to arbitrarily dictate good and evil in our government and culture or to weaponize the hate label against ideological opponents.

My hope is that this becomes America's turning point, that we never forget Charlie Kirk's murder, and that Congress confronts the brewing political violence in our midst. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Sypher follows:]

Committee Hearing Testimony: Andrew Sypher

Introduction

Good morning, Mr. Chairman and members of the committee—

My name is Andrew Sypher, and I am the Executive Vice President of Field Operations for Turning Point USA.

In my years leading our operations, I have overseen the chapter growth at colleges and high schools, building the largest campus chapter organization in the country. I have also managed events, including Charlie Kirk's "Prove Me Wrong" tables, where his passion for open dialogue with disagreeing students made him a social media giant—reaching millions of young people through tough, humanizing conversations.

Over the years, Charlie and Turning Point have been attacked by groups like the Southern Poverty Law Center, which villainizes our open-dialogue approach on campuses. The SPLC hastily labels ideologically opposing organizations as "hate groups," misleading well-intentioned entities and blurring the line between real hate and mere differences of opinion.

Charlie warned, just before his murder, that the SPLC's "Hate Map" designation—equating campus kids who promote the Constitution, the Bill of Rights, and pro-life, pro-family values with the KKK and neo-Nazis—would "put Turning Point in the crosshairs."

This proved prophetic. Just months later, an assassin took Charlie Kirk's life on campus during one of those very open-dialogue events that often lowered tensions and fostered healthy debate among young people. Charlie embodied what made America great: free speech. Students flocked to these exchanges not just for entertainment, but to witness how conversations labeled "triggering" or "hateful" by the left could humanize even the toughest opponents.

This is the work we continue in Charlie's legacy. We reject the idea that more speech is hate speech. Hate festers when institutions shut down dialogue, creating divides and equating ordinary Americans with homegrown terrorism—what we call the coddling of the American mind.

We have seen this animosity firsthand. I was standing just 10 feet to his left when Charlie was assassinated at Utah Valley University—an act later condoned and justified by some of the very people who labeled him and Turning Point a hate group. At places like Berkeley, where we recently held a pre-scheduled event, violent protesters gathered and injured civilians. This mirrors years of organized protests involving groups like Antifa: breaking doors, destroying property, setting fires, and threatening attendees. Since Charlie's death, political violence against conservatives has only risen.

I urge this committee to act decisively. We cannot allow biased organizations like the SPLC to arbitrarily dictate good and evil in our government and culture—or to weaponize the “hate” label against ideological opponents.

My hope is that this becomes America’s turning point: that we never forget Charlie Kirk’s murder and that Congress confronts the brewing political violence in our midst.

Thank you.

Mr. ROY. Thank you, Mr. Sypher. Thank you for your testimony. Ms. Tyler, you have five minutes. Reminding you to turn your microphone on, and a little grace on the five minutes if you need it.

STATEMENT OF AMANDA TYLER

Ms. TYLER. Thank you. Good afternoon, Chair Roy, Ranking Member Scanlon, and the Members of the Subcommittee. I am Amanda Tyler, Executive Director of Baptist Joint Committee for Religious Liberty.

As a faithful Christian and a patriotic American, I am honored to be here this afternoon to offer testimony about why the treatment of civil society organizations is directly relevant to religious liberty and First Amendment protections.

First, I mourn with the Jewish community in the wake of the deadly antisemitic attack at Bondi Beach in Australia this weekend. This latest attack, fueled by antireligious hate, is a tragic reminder of the need for a united front that will stand against every instance of violence and actively work to dismantle the ideologies that drive that violence.

For 89 years, the BJC has worked to advance faith freedom for all. The BJC has a consistent record of supporting both of the First Amendment's religion clauses, no establishment and free exercise. Our commitment to religious freedom stems from the historical experiences of early Baptists, who suffered the pain of persecution that resulted from religious fervor coupled with the coercive power of the State.

The BJC works with a diverse group of organizations, both secular and religious, and various coalitions. Depending on the case or the policy we are working on, we may find ourselves on the same or opposing sides with other groups that work on religious freedom issues or other concerns that are crucial to our pluralistic democracy.

Nonprofits, religious and secular, are essential to American democracy, creating opportunities for civic engagement, caring for neighbors, and standing up to abuses of power. When government attacks these institutions, especially during moments of instability or when government services are strained, communities suffer.

American civil society represents the broad diversity of the American people. Dissent and disagreement between these groups is a hallmark of a free society. We cannot conflate policy disagreement with dangerous conduct. The government and especially law enforcement, should respond to facts, not ideology.

Civil rights organizations, Southern Poverty Law Center included, are part of the essential infrastructure of American civil society. Civil rights organizations have historically helped communities in many ways, including documenting and combating discrimination and racially motivated violence, ensuring access to justice, providing education and services where government capacity is limited, supporting those targeted by bigotry or political retaliation, and strengthening democracy by defending constitutional rights.

Today, as communities face rising extremism, political polarization, and gaps in Federal support, these organizations remain cru-

cial, often stepping in where government has stepped back. Today's hearing is not about one nonprofit. Instead, hearings like this one serve to normalize the idea that government should use oversight, enforcement, and public rhetoric to punish and make examples of organizations whose viewpoints or work challenge the administration's agenda.

Such retaliation can chill advocacy, undermine constitutional norms, and threaten the independence of the nonprofit sector. The government targeting of nonprofits should concern all Americans. A functioning democracy depends on the ability of organizations across the spectrum of viewpoints to debate without fear of retaliation.

What begins as political retaliation against civil society organizations quickly becomes a threat to conscience rights, religious pluralism, and the foundational First Amendment protections that safeguard all people and all faith communities.

Religious liberty depends on a government that remains neutral when it comes to religion, neither favoring nor denigrating any religious viewpoint held by individuals and groups. The government misuse of its authority, whether through investigations, rhetoric, or selective enforcement, creates a climate where religious people, houses of worship, and faith-based charities are put at risk.

For faith to remain free, it must never be used as a tool of political power. Religion must never be used as a proxy for threat or danger. There are no second-class faiths in this country. When the State elevates certain ideologies and stigmatizes others, it erodes both free expression and free exercise.

A vibrant and free civil society is core to religious liberty in our country, as well as essential to achieving the promise of our constitutional democracy that all belong, no matter how one worships, how one believes, or how one identifies religiously or not. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Tyler follows:]



Faith. Freedom. **For All.**

Testimony of Amanda Tyler,
On behalf of BJC (Baptist Joint Committee for Religious Liberty)

Before the
House Judiciary Committee's Subcommittee on the Constitution and Limited Government

Hearing: "Partisan and Profitable: The SPLC's Influence on Federal Civil Rights Policy"
December 16, 2025

I. Introduction

Good afternoon. I am Amanda Tyler, executive director of Baptist Joint Committee for Religious Liberty (BJC). As a faithful Christian and patriotic American, I am honored to be here this afternoon to offer testimony about why the treatment of civil society organizations is directly relevant to religious liberty and First Amendment protections.

For 89 years, BJC has worked to advance faith freedom for all, bringing a uniquely Baptist witness to the principle that faith must be freely chosen and exercised, neither advanced nor inhibited by government. BJC is composed of more than a dozen Baptist organizations and supported by thousands of individuals and Baptist churches across the country.

BJC has a consistent record of supporting both of the First Amendment's religion clauses — No Establishment and Free Exercise. BJC chaired the diverse Coalition for the Free Exercise of Religion that pushed for passage of the Religious Freedom Restoration Act of 1993 and the Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act of 2000. Our commitment to religious freedom stems from the historical experiences of early Baptists, who suffered the pain of persecution that resulted from religious fervor coupled with the coercive power of the state.

BJC works with a diverse group of organizations, both secular and religious, in various coalitions. Depending on the case or policy we are working on, we may find ourselves on the same or opposing sides with other groups that work on religious freedom issues or other concerns that are crucial to our pluralistic democracy. As an example of the diverse coalitions, in our most recent filing at the U.S. Supreme Court, in the *Landor vs. Louisiana Department of Corrections* case, BJC joined an *amicus* brief led by Christian Legal Society that included both the National Association of Evangelicals and the American Civil Liberties Union.

II. An independent civil society, including civil rights organizations, is crucial to America's constitutional democracy.

Nonprofits — religious and secular — are essential to American democracy, creating opportunities for civic engagement, caring for neighbors, and standing up to abuses of power. When government attacks these institutions, especially during moments of instability or when government services are strained, communities suffer.

American civil society represents the broad diversity of the American people. Dissent and disagreement between these groups is a hallmark of a free society. We cannot conflate policy disagreement with dangerous conduct. Government, and especially law enforcement, should respond to facts, not ideology.

Civil rights organizations — Southern Poverty Law Center included — are part of the essential infrastructure of American civil society. Civil rights organizations have historically helped communities in many ways, including documenting and combating discrimination and racially motivated violence; ensuring access to justice; providing education and services where government capacity is limited; supporting those targeted by bigotry or political retaliation; and strengthening democracy by defending constitutional rights. Today, as communities face rising extremism, political polarization, and gaps in federal support, these organizations remain crucial, often stepping in where government has stepped back.

III. Government interference with civil society should concern all Americans, regardless of ideology or religion.

This hearing fits squarely within a broader pattern of government retaliation against civil society. The Administration and its allies are increasingly directing government resources to single out organizations that defend civil rights, protect vulnerable communities, and support participation in our constitutional democracy. Such retaliation can chill advocacy, undermine constitutional norms, and threaten the independence of the nonprofit sector.

Government targeting of nonprofits should concern all Americans. A functioning democracy depends on the ability of organizations across the spectrum of viewpoints to debate without fear of retaliation.

These attacks come as nonprofits are stepping in to meet rising community needs — needs exacerbated by efforts to undermine civil rights and civil liberties, the affordability crisis, shutdown threats, slashing crucial governmental funding of services, and policy instability. When government undermines the very organizations filling the gaps left by these failures, it harms communities directly and weakens democratic institutions.

IV. **Attacks on civil society threaten religious liberty.**

What begins as political retaliation against civil society organizations quickly becomes a threat to conscience rights, religious pluralism, and the foundational First Amendment protections that safeguard all people and all faith communities.

Religious liberty depends on a government that remains neutral when it comes to religion, neither favoring nor denigrating any religious viewpoint held by individuals and groups. Government misuse of its authority — whether through investigations, rhetoric, or selective enforcement — creates a climate where religious people, houses of worship, and faith-based charities are put at risk.

Diversity of religious expression, belief, and identity in the United States is a strength that we as a people should re-commit ourselves to protecting. That includes diversity among different religions, as well as diversity within a given religion, such as Christianity. With that diversity, disagreement and dissent are inevitable and should be peacefully protected by First Amendment freedoms.

For faith to remain free, it must never be used as a tool of political power. There are no second-class faiths in this country. Religion must never be used as a proxy for threat or danger. When the state elevates certain ideologies and stigmatizes others, it erodes both free expression and free exercise.

V. **Conclusion**

A vibrant and free civil society is core to religious liberty in our country, as well as essential to achieving the promise of our constitutional democracy: that all belong, no matter how one worships, what one believes, or how one identifies, religiously or not.

Mr. ROY. Thank you, Ms. Tyler, for your testimony.

Without objection, the gentleman from Arizona, Mr. Biggs, will be permitted to participate in today's hearing for the purpose of questioning the witnesses if a Member yields him time for that purpose.

Without objection, we will now proceed under the five-minute rule with questions, and I will now recognize the gentlelady from Wyoming for five minutes.

Ms. HAGEMAN. Thank you. Good afternoon everyone. We appreciate you joining us here for this important discussion.

The intended effect of SPLC's Hate Map is clear: By lumping mainstream conservative voices an organization in with actual Nazis and extremists the SPLC delegitimizes any opinion to the right of whatever line the SPLC deems acceptable.

Richard Cohen, the former President of the SPLC, when discussing whether ANTIFA would be listed, was quoted as saying that, quote, "There might be forms of hate out there that you may consider hateful, but it's not the type of hate we follow."

In June 2020, the SPLC published an analysis stating that designating ANTIFA as a domestic terrorist organization is dangerous and threatens civil liberties. Let that sink in.

According to the Southern Poverty Law Center's website, its hate data list for 2024 includes 1,371 groups, up from 599 in the year 2000. Some of the groups listed what we should expect: Neo-Nazis, the KKK, and others. However, this list lumps in countless conservative advocacy organizations including the Alliance for Defending Freedom, Moms for Liberty, Parents Defending Education, Turning Point USA, and the Family Research Council.

Now, Mr. Sypher and Mr. Perkins, you have both testified about the impact and the consequences of the SPLC designating your organizations as hate groups.

I am going to start with you, Mr. Perkins. Could you briefly describe or list any of the commonly held conservative beliefs that would lead the SPLC to classify your organization as a hate group?

Mr. PERKINS. According to the SPLC the reason is our biblical view of marriage and human sexuality. That is what causes them to classify us as a hate group.

Ms. HAGEMAN. As a result then you had the incident that you described during your testimony earlier. They actually put a target on your back, didn't they, Mr. Perkins?

Mr. PERKINS. Correct. If you'll recall, back in 2012 there was a Chick-Fil-A Day where nationwide people went to Chick-Fil-A because Chick-Fil-A at the time had made a statement in support of natural marriage. Because we, along with then-Governor Mike Huckabee, now Ambassador Huckabee, had promoted that day, Corkins went to the map of SPLC to find FRC and he targeted us. It was also when he was arrested, he had a list in his pocket which had actually a couple of more Washington, DC-based organizations coming from the SPLC map.

Ms. HAGEMAN. Mr. Sypher, can you describe some of the beliefs of Turning Point USA that would warrant a listing as a hate group by the SPLC?

Mr. SYPHER. For the record, none. We have three core beliefs at Turning Point USA. Charlie would always state them. First, the

constitution is the greatest document to ever be written. Second, the U.S.A. is the greatest country to exist in this world. Third, that capitalism is the greatest economic system to lift people out of poverty.

Ms. HAGEMAN. As a result of those three core beliefs SPLC has designated you as a hate group. Is that fair?

Mr. SYPHER. Not at all.

Ms. HAGEMAN. That is right. While there is no doubt that these designations can have a significant impact not only on the reputation and operation of listed organizations, tying them to the entities that are truly responsible for hateful acts and violence, it actually inflames tensions and threatens individuals' safety, as you have both described.

One point that sticks out to me when looking through the center's hate data is that very few, if any, Left-wing extremist organizations and activities show up. In one of the more well-known examples, ANTIFA is conspicuously absent despite the SPLC's specifically maintaining categories for antigovernment extremist groups and general hate. In a more recent example, the SPLC failed to specifically condemn the violent actors endangering Jewish students at American universities following the horrific October 17th attack carried out by Hamas and supported by radical Islamists, including many right here in the United States of America.

Mr. O'Neil, could you briefly provide some insights on why they would exclude ANTIFA, pro-Palestinian, and pro-Hamas organizations on American campuses, Jane's Revenge, and other Left-wing extremist groups from their hate data framework?

Mr. O'NEIL. They have ties to some of these organizations, particularly with ANTIFA. They hired a woman who is described as ANTIFA's secret weapon, a researcher. When it comes to—I can't speak to exactly why they don't, but what I can say is it is an absolute travesty that they will put organizations like Turning Point USA and Moms for Liberty as antigovernment extremist groups, comparable to the Klan in their view, and then not put actual groups that are hurling Molotov cocktails at government buildings.

Ms. HAGEMAN. I think that you make a very good point. I'm out of time. I yield back. Thank you all for being here today.

Mr. ROY. I thank the gentlelady from Wyoming for her questions.

I will now recognize the Ranking Member, the gentleman from Maryland, Mr. Raskin, for five minutes.

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Chair, thank you. Maps are protected by the First Amendment. You can make a flat Earth map, you can make a map of s-hole countries, as designated by Donald Trump, you can make a map that calls the Gulf of Mexico the Gulf of America or the Gulf of Mexico. If you don't like somebody else's map, you make your own map. That is basic John Stuart Mill. That is what we do under the First Amendment. We have got an entire hearing organized around one map published by one group.

Look, I am someone who is an ardent defender of freedom of speech, on all sides. People also should be held responsible for the speech they engage in. Legally we can hold them responsible only if their speech incites imminent lawless action and violence. That is the *Brandenburg* standard. Short of that—or engages in defama-

tion, for example. Short of that, we hold them accountable morally and politically. There is nothing wrong with the process of saying I don't like your speech, I don't like your map.

Of course, it would be good if we had a real hearing that was about hate speech generally in the country or speech that endangers other people. For example, a number of the mass murderers who showed up in Buffalo or in El Paso and killed dozens of people themselves in their manifestos and their social media statements said that they were acting based on the statement that—and the well-known conspiracy theory that George Soros is engaged in a plan to replace the American population, the so-called great replacement theory. Does that mean we can ban that speech? No, we can't ban that, but certainly we should talk about it, and we should talk about the moral implications of people engaged in.

Same thing with people in the Pro-Life Movement who call doctors and physicians, who are OB/GYNs, baby killers, which has led in many cases to doctors being murdered or violently assaulted, or attacks on abortion clinics. It is true that speech does have a real world effect even though in our society we only allow it to be punished if it is incitement to imminent lawless action, or analogous to that.

Ms. Tyler, let me ask you: I think that we don't want violent attacks against the Southern Poverty Law Center. I know you don't work for them. You work for the Baptist Committee, right?

Ms. TYLER. That's right. I work for Baptist Joint Committee for Religious Liberties.

Mr. RASKIN. OK. Is the Southern Poverty Law Center a hate group like the Ku Klux Klan or the Neo-Nazis? Do they proclaim interest in violence or nonviolence, and has anybody at the Southern Poverty Law Center ever been convicted of engaging in a conspiracy to murder to engage in violence against anybody including Charlie Kirk?

Ms. TYLER. I know of no reports of that violence, and I know of SPLC as a civil rights organization that tries to draw awareness to White supremacy and files legal action to protect our civil rights laws.

Mr. RASKIN. OK. The way that we sort this out in an organized society under the rule of law is that if somebody actually engages in a conspiracy to murder, or aids and abets a murder, or imminently incites violence against someone, they can be prosecuted. Short of that, if they engage in speech, especially the kind of speech the SPLC is involved in, which is trying to stop hate violence in the country, then we essentially leave them alone, except for some reason we have decided to have an entire hearing about one map created by this one group.

Look, if we really wanted to promote nonviolent peaceful discourse in the country and to promote greater understanding and civil peace, which I hope everybody in this room could get behind, what would we be doing? What are you doing to try to promote civil peace and civil conversation and dialog?

Ms. TYLER. Well, one thing we do at Baptist Joint Committee, along with a number of other organizations, is trying to draw awareness to our First Amendment protections for religious freedom, and to make space for all different views on religion, and to

help people have some tough conversations including in religious communities. One of the projects that we work on is something called Christians Against Christian Nationalism. We don't shy away from difficult topics that we believe do contribute to different—

Mr. RASKIN. OK. I am running out of time, but just tell us finally what do you think is behind this really extraordinary attack on civil society organizations and particular groups like the Southern Poverty Law Center?

Ms. TYLER. Well, I see this as an attack on civil society, as a way to try to quash dissent, as a way to chill advocacy. That I really fear for the future of our pluralistic democracy if groups and individuals succumb to the intimidation. This is a moment that we all need to be leaning into our democratic society and participating like many of us have never done so before.

Mr. RASKIN. Thank you. I yield back, Mr. Chair.

Mr. ROY. I thank the Ranking Member, Mr. Raskin. I will now recognize the gentleman from North Carolina, Mr. Harris, for five minutes.

Mr. HARRIS. Thank you, Mr. Chair and thanks to all of you on our panel today.

Something that has been concerning to me is the Biden–Harris Administration's targeting of Catholics in Richmond for being so-called extremists. It was thanks to the investigative work done by this Committee that we learned at the Biden–Harris Administration relied on the Southern Poverty Law Center and its memo that labeled traditional Catholics as domestic terrorist threats.

I applaud FBI Director Kash Patel's decision to terminate the FBI relationship with the SPLC, although such a relationship should have been terminated a long, long time ago.

Mr. SYPHER, what does it say to you about the Biden Administration's view of conservatives that they were using a resource that categorized conservative groups like ADF and Family Research Council among the likes of the Aryan Brotherhood and the Nation of Islam?

Mr. SYPHER. Mr. Harris, thank you. What it shows is that the Biden–Harris Administration did not truly care about what most Americans believe. Turning Point USA represents what most Americans believe, in the nuclear family. They believe in law and order. Those very things are the things that the SPLC uses in their very biased approach in targeting and labeling Christian conservative organizations.

Mr. HARRIS. Well, thank you, sir. Mr. Perkins, your organization advocates from a Christian world view, but was labeled a hate group by the Southern Poverty Law Center for taking stances that align with simply biblical teaching. I want to ask you a few questions, Mr. Perkins. Is the Christian world view hateful?

Mr. PERKINS. No.

Mr. HARRIS. Is it affirming that there are only two genders hateful?

Mr. PERKINS. No.

Mr. HARRIS. Is believing God created marriage between a man and a woman hateful?

Mr. PERKINS. No. It's the reason we're all here today.

Mr. HARRIS. Is the Christian world view that teaches the very morals on which this Nation was founded hateful?

Mr. PERKINS. No, sir.

Mr. HARRIS. Does disapproving of someone's actions mean that you hate them?

Mr. PERKINS. No. The definition that the SPLC holds out is one that's trying to prevent violence. Words are not violent when you're having a disagreement over public policy. You should be free to do so. We advocate for their rights and their freedom to do that. As a former police officer, as a Marine veteran I protected the First Amendment right. As the issue here today is not a map; it's who uses the map. Government agencies should rely on transparent peer-reviewed criteria, not partisan advocacy groups. We should implement safeguards against unverified external lists used by government to target peace-loving, law-abiding citizens.

Mr. HARRIS. Well, according to a Gallup poll 69 percent of Americans identify with a Christian denomination. Now, of course, you and I know that there's a diversity of beliefs within Christianity, but what does it say about the SPLC that they would label as hateful a group that aligns with the identity of the majority of our country?

Mr. PERKINS. Well, that they are anti-Christian for one, and biblical truth. I would even question whether or not they're pro-American.

Mr. HARRIS. Thank you, sir. Mr. O'Neil, I worry that not every organization may have the resources to be able to deal with the consequences of being placed on SPLC's Hate Map. What are some of the challenges that you will see that may arise within an organization if they happen to land or be labeled a hate group by this group?

Mr. O'NEIL. Yes, there are many challenges. It chills some donors who are afraid that because of the Hate Map, the hate group designation, their information might be leaked, and then they would face repercussions for giving to an organization they believe in.

There are also—I have a list here—Alphabet used it for YouTube as a trusted flagger. *AmazonSmile* excluded conservative and Christian. By the way, not always conservative and Christian; there are some very nonpartisan and Left-leaning groups on this map. They excluded them on *AmazonSmile*. Benevity, which works with hundreds of companies to determine where their employees can give to charities has bragged about using the SPLC Hate Map to determine which nonprofits can receive money. There are many ways in which an organization can be negatively impacted by being put on this map.

Mr. HARRIS. Well, thank you. Thanks to all of you as witnesses. Mr. Chair, thank you for bringing this before the American people. I yield back.

Mr. ROY. I thank the gentleman from North Carolina. I will now recognize the Ranking Member for some unanimous consent requests.

Ms. SCANLON. Thank you. I would seek unanimous consent to introduce into the record several articles. The first would be from *America Magazine*. "Trump Administration threatens Sister Norma Pimentel's migrant aid with a 6-year funding ban." That is dated

December 15, 2025. This is from the *Catholic Standard*, “Vance with U.S. bishops over their pushback on Trump’s immigration policy,” dated January 20, 2025. “The U.S. Bishops Special Message,” dated November 12, 2025, addressing their concern for the immigration policy of the Trump Administration.

Mr. ROY. Without objection, I will now recognize the gentleman from Tennessee for five minutes.

Ms. COHEN. Thank you, Mr. Chair. I listened to all your opening statements, and the Chair and the Ranking Member, and everybody here until I came down.

One thing concerned me. Ms. Tyler, I’d like to ask you Mr. O’Neil said that the Southern Poverty Law Center was anti-Christian. It upsets me greatly when any group is anti-Jewish, anti-Catholic, anti-Muslim, and anti-Christian. Does the Southern Poverty Law Center have any Church of God and Christ folks that maybe support them, and Baptists, Southern Baptists folk, and Methodists, et cetera, et cetera?

Ms. TYLER. I don’t work for the Southern Poverty Law Center. I can’t speak exactly, but what I hear you saying is there’s a difference between being against a religion and calling out ideologies, or hate speech in this case, which is what is the issue here that we’re discussing.

Mr. COHEN. Is the Southern Poverty Law Center against Christian nationalism?

Ms. TYLER. I think that they have named White Christian nationalism as an ideology to watch, as something that does fuel hate-driven violence.

Mr. COHEN. Can you define White Christian nationalism for me?

Ms. TYLER. Yes. White Christian nationalism is this political ideology that seeks to merge American and Christian identities into one. Put another way, White Christian nationalism suggests that to be a real American that one has to be a Christian. It does provide cover for White supremacy and racial subjugation. As I mentioned earlier, to be against Christian nationalism is not to be anti-Christian.

Mr. COHEN. Right.

Ms. TYLER. I am a Christian and I represent many, many more people, Christians, who are horrified to see our faith used to justify discrimination, to justify exclusion, and in some cases violence.

Mr. COHEN. What are some of the other things that—I know you’re not necessarily a spokesperson for the Southern Poverty Law Center, but what are some of the other things they stand for and support, and oppose?

Ms. TYLER. Yes, I know them as a historic civil right organization that stands against White supremacy, that stands against antisemitism, that has brought critical litigation against the Ku Klux Klan, that stands for supporting civil rights and making sure particularly in the American South that our promise of equal protection of the law and all our other civil rights and liberties are protected to the fullest extent of the law.

Mr. COHEN. Well, Mr. O’Neil or maybe Mr. Perkins both mentioned the history of the Southern Poverty Law Center being outstanding. Then, Mr. Roy did, too, that they used to bring cases. I still think they do bring cases that are important. Julian Bond was

a very close friend of mine and somebody I know Mr. Raskin knew. He was a great American. He was one of the founders of the Southern Poverty Law Center. Morris Dees as was a very strong spokesperson for civil rights and support. He was one of the founders.

Mr. O'Neil, is there anything you can help me with on Christian groups that they—not Christian groups, but the fact your statement that the Southern Poverty Law Center is anti-Christian? How is the Southern Poverty Law Center anti-Christian?

Mr. O'NEIL. Yes. There is this document called the Catechism of the Catholic Church. It lays out the belief statements for Catholics, one billion people across the world.

Mr. COHEN. Whose statement? Is that the Southern Poverty Law Center?

Mr. O'NEIL. No. This is published by the Catholic Church.

Mr. COHEN. OK. Mr. O'Neil. By the Magisterium of the Catholic Church.

The Southern Poverty Law Center when they decided to put the Ruth Institute, which is a small charity in Louisiana, one of the groups that it finds it difficult to respond and have the money to respond to the negative defamation of the Southern Poverty Law Center, in justifying putting them on the Hate Map the SPLC quoted—and they didn't just quote it once, they quoted it twice—they quoted the president of the Ruth Institute just saying that the Catholic Church believes—and this is the statement of faith for all Catholics, remember, that homosexual activity is intrinsically disordered.

The SPLC put that on there twice, suggesting that just believing what one billion Catholics ostensibly say they believe justifies you being on the Hate Map. If there is anything more anti-Christian than that, I'm not sure what it is.

Mr. COHEN. Frankly, what did the Ruth Institute do to have this SPLC come at it?

Mr. O'NEIL. Yes. The Ruth Institute advocates for survivors of the sexual revolution. That is what they call people who suffer from family breakdown.

The President of the Ruth Institute, Jennifer Roback Morse, has gone on the radio many times. She is a devout Catholic. She has cited the eight positions of the Catholic Church. It is those statements of faith from the Catholic Church that derive directly from the Catechism that the Southern Poverty Law Center decided was hateful enough to cite as evidence to put her on the Hate Map.

Mr. COHEN. They put her on the Hate Map?

Mr. O'NEIL. Yes. They put her on the Hate Map. They have not put the Catholic Church on the Hate Map. Though, by putting her on the Hate Map in this way they have suggested that the entire Catholic Church should be on the Hate Map. This is something I would love Democrats—

Mr. COHEN. That is wrong. You take one example, Ms. Morse, and put her on a Hate Map and say that is the entire Catholic Church? I don't think Pope Leo would be put on that group, I wouldn't think.

Mr. O'NEIL. Well, Pope Leo stands for the faith statements in the Catechism of the Catholic Church.

If the Catechism of the Catholic Church is a hateful document that justifies putting you on the Hate Map, then he belongs on the Hate Map, logically, based on the Southern Poverty Law Center's own presentation.

Mr. COHEN. Ms. Tyler, do you know anything about this lady for the group?

Ms. TYLER. I do not.

Mr. COHEN. OK. Anything else Mr. O'Neil that makes you think—I know a lot of ministers that are Church of God in Christ ministers who support the SPLC.

Mr. O'NEIL. Yes.

Mr. COHEN. There are a lot of Black Baptist churches, maybe not Southern Baptist Churches, maybe there are Black Southern Baptist Churches, too, that support the SPLC.

Mr. O'NEIL. The other aspect is,—

Mr. COHEN. They are Christian.

Mr. O'NEIL. —and something I mentioned in the testimony, that the SPLC for a long time, because groups like Tony's had been put on the Hate Map, the SPLC claims it isn't because they stand for marriages between a man and woman, but that is essentially what it boils down to if you look at the history of why they chose to put them on there.

The SPLC has defended themselves from the charge of being anti-Christian for years. The fact they changed this language once from anti-LGBT to anti-LGBTQ in explaining on their website, so, they stood by this. They said when they were called anti-Christian they said, "no, we are not anti-Christian because we don't put every Christian group that stands for the traditional definition of marriage on the Hate Map."

They only had one piece of evidence for this. That was that they didn't put Focus on the Family on the Hate Map. Then, earlier this year the language defending themselves from the anti-Christian charge disappeared from their website and they put Focus on the Family on the Hate Map.

Mr. COHEN. My time is up. Thank you for—

Mr. ROY. Mr. Cohen, I like the spirited back and forth and the way you handled that. I was happy to let it go overtime.

Mr. COHEN. Thank you.

Mr. ROY. I appreciate your questions. I now recognize the gentleman from California for five minutes.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Thank you, Mr. Chair. First, I agree with Mr. Raskin that the Southern Poverty Law Center has a right to say whatever it is that they want to say. The reason we defend outrageous speech like theirs is because we have the same freedom as men and women of good will to call them out on it.

That is what I see as the purpose of this hearing today, to call them out for truly outrageous and patently unfair and hypocritical allegations. That is the point that Ms. Hagerman made.

Ms. Tyler says, well, this is an attempt to intimidate and chill SPLC's speech. Well, that is an interesting perspective, considering the fact that the SPLC's stock in trade is to intimidate and chill the speech of anyone they disagree with, mainstream conservative groups like Turning Point USA, and the Family Research Council,

the Federation for American Immigration Reform, Moms for Liberty, and the Center for Immigration Studies.

Mr. O'Neil, have they ever called out ANTIFA? I think did I understand you to say they actually had ANTIFA activists involved with their organization??

Mr. O'NEIL. Yes. They had a woman who was described as ANTIFA's secret weapon. She was profiled in *Wired Magazine* describing her that way.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Well, what was—

Mr. O'NEIL. She was hired full time. Then, they also had a man who was charged with domestic terrorism for his role in a Molotov cocktail riot in 2023. He is an SPLC attorney.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Well, they are calling Turning Point USA and Family Research Council hate groups. Have they ever called out the Animal Liberation Front for their vandalism and violent attacks they have made, or Jane's Revenge?

Mr. O'NEIL. No.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Weather Underground?

Mr. O'NEIL. No.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. How about Students for Justice in Palestine or any—

Mr. O'NEIL. No.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. —of the Palestinian groups that are responsible for violence on our campuses, for intimidating and threatening, in some cases attacking Jewish students; have they called out any of these as hate groups?

Mr. O'NEIL. That would be another no. Also, when the October 7th attack happened they waited three weeks before issuing a statement. Then, they falsely accused Israel of targeting civilians.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. How about the Council on American-Islamic Relations that was just declared a terrorism organization by the State of Florida? Have they ever called them a hate group?

Mr. O'NEIL. No. They work very closely with them.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. How about the Turtle Island Liberation Front that was just implicated in the news today in a massive plot to detonate multiple bombs throughout Southern California to create a mass casualty attack against Americans?

Mr. O'NEIL. No. Not present on the Hate Map.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Those are not hate groups according to the SPLC, but Turning Point USA, Family Research Council, and the other mainstream conservative groups are.

Do I have that correct?

Mr. O'NEIL. Gays Against Groomers, which is a LGBT group that opposes drag queen story hour.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. The other question that has been raised is, well, why does this rise as a fit object for a Congressional hearing is simply because this group, with assets of hundreds of millions of dollars, has been advising both government agencies to direct their powers against these Americans, as well as advising financial institutions and social media platforms.

Social media platforms, of course, is the prime public square of today's society, discouraging the very right of these groups to even express themselves.

Mr. O'NEIL. Exactly. There are few organizations that engage in the chilling of civil society more than the Southern Poverty Law Center.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. I have got about a minute-and-a-half left. I yield to Mr. Biggs.

Mr. BIGGS. I thank the gentleman for yielding. I will just echo one of the points you made is that stock in trade at SPLC is to do exactly what they are decrying other groups, and that is to intimidate, bully, scare, and go after.

In so doing they make mistakes. They made a mistake with FRC. They made a mistake with Turning Point USA.

Here is one. I would like to submit these article for the record: "Southern Poverty Law Center settles lawsuit after falsely labeling extremist organization;" "The Southern Poverty Law Center apologizes to Ben Carson," takes him off extremist list; "Southern Poverty Law Center has lost all credibility;" "Has a civil rights stalwart lost its way?"; and from the *Freedom Socialist Party*, "Fighting Hate: The lucrative business of fighting hate: In-house bigotry rocks Southern Poverty Law Center."

Mr. ROY. Without objection.

Mr. BIGGS. With that I will yield back this at time.

Mr. ROY. I thank the gentleman from California. I thank the gentleman from Arizona. I will now recognize, well, I will recognize the gentleman from Tennessee for something for the record, I think.

Mr. COHEN. Exactly. Thank you, sir. I introduce for the record an article that the "SPLC Files Complaint Against Two Notorious Neo-Nazi Leaders and Goyim Defense League for Violating Civil Rights of Members of Nashville Jewish Center."

Mr. ROY. Without objection. I now recognize the gentlelady from Washington for five minutes.

Ms. JAYAPAL. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

It is quite unprecedented for us to use the Committee time, valuable Committee time to target a specific group. Based on what I am hearing, the criticisms of the Southern Poverty Law Center seem to boil down to three things:

- (1) That it has healthy finances and an endowment;
- (2) that it collaborated with the Department of Justice during the Biden Administration; and
- (3) that it calls out White supremacy, including White Christian Nationalism.

I guess if my colleagues on the other side of the aisle are so hell-bent on the finances of nonprofits, we could also talk about the Koch Brothers funding tens of hundreds of millions of dollars to the Cato Institute and Americans for Prosperity.

If they are so concerned about nonprofits collaborating with the Executive Branch, where do I even begin with the Heritage Foundation and Project 2025? Throughout his campaign Donald Trump disavowed the conservative nonprofit's policy blueprint when polls showed that it was deeply unpopular with the American people.

As soon as he took office, he made it the foundation of his policies by appointing at least half a dozen Project 2025 architects and supporters to oversee the Federal budget, mass deportations, cuts to healthcare and SNAP, dismantling of environmental protections,

policies that harm all communities, and disproportionately target communities of color.

Now, maybe this shouldn't be a surprise. The President has a history of nominating or appointing officials with racist beliefs, including Paul Ingrassia and Carl Higbie. Architects of Project 2025 also have a very well-documented history of writing racist, writing statements or activity.

I won't repeat all of them here. I do have a visual right behind me with just a couple of examples, including assertions that Black people and immigrants have lower I.Q.s than White citizens.

We have known for a while . . . that individuals differ in their inherent capabilities. The racists do, too, with Whites and Asians on the top, and Blacks on the bottom.

That was from Richard Hanania, contributor to Project 2025. How about this one:

The ceaseless importation of Third World foreigners with no tradition of, taste for, or experience in liberty, means that the electorate grows more Left and less traditionally American.

Whatever that means—with every cycle. That is from Michael Anton, also a contributor to Project 2025. How about this one:

The prediction that new Hispanic immigrants will have low I.Q. children and grandchildren is difficult to argue against.

That is from Jason Richwine, contributor to Project 2025.

Just today I was reading an article about a Member of the Judiciary Committee who said,

It is time for a Muslim travel ban, radical deportations of all mainstream Muslim legal and illegal immigrants, and citizenship revocations wherever possible. Mainstream Muslims have declared war on us. The least we can do is kick them the hell out of America.

Do people understand that there are two billion Muslims across the world? That is 25 percent of the global population. I am waiting to see if anybody on that side says anything about condemning those remarks about Muslims.

We should be very clear here about what is going on. Ms. Tyler, I just want to ask you, what role does rhetoric like these, these quotes that I mentioned, what role does it play in promoting White supremacy and violence?

What happens when we give people who espouse this kind of rhetoric more responsibility in our civic institutions?

Ms. TYLER. Well, rhetoric like this certainly furthers White supremacy and can further discrimination and, potentially, violence against marginalized communities. Particularly in the minds of violent extremists when it combines with more extreme views like the Great Replacement Theory, as it has done, and killed people in this country.

When this rhetoric is also espoused by people who hold government power, members of these marginalized communities will fear not just that violence might come to their community, but also that the force of government might be used against them in various ways.

Ms. JAYAPAL. Civil rights groups like the Southern Poverty Law Center have a long history of suing White supremacist groups for violent rhetoric and actions that target communities of color.

What are some of those lawsuits and why are they critical for keeping communities safe?

Ms. TYLER. Well, I think Mr. Cohen just referenced a recent lawsuit that was filed that involved a Jewish Community Center and some individuals who entered that with the intent to intimidate and potentially commit violence. They brought a lawsuit that included claims under the Ku Klux Klan Act.

Ms. JAYAPAL. This is such important work. Yet, we are trying to undermine the SPLC simply because it disagrees with far Right policies, and shines a spotlight on White supremacist ideology.

How has the Trump Administration used the power of the Federal Government to silence and weaken these groups like SPLC?

Ms. TYLER. Well, we have seen a number of actions this year. Some of them are rhetorical by blaming, for instance, Lutheran social service organizations, accusing them baselessly of money laundering. That was in the early DOGE attacks.

Then, more recently, with the Presidential Memorandum that has this very broad language that tries to link ideologies that are really ill-defined, ideologies like anticapitalism or anti-Christianity, trying to link those without evidence to violent conduct.

The impact of is that it will chill advocacy, that it tries to silence dissent. Because even if that Presidential Memorandum lacks the force of law, since there are no laws on the books around domestic terrorism, they do serve to be a warning to groups that if you oppose this administration that you will come under scrutiny, extra scrutiny, like this hearing.

Ms. JAYAPAL. A threat to free speech rights of some of us matter to all of us.

I thank you, Mr. Chair.

Mr. ROY. I thank the gentlelady from Washington. I now recognize the gentleman from Missouri for five minutes.

Mr. ONDER. Thank you, Mr. Chair. For more than two decades the Southern Poverty Law Center has operated its so-called Hate Map, a project it claims is meant to track extremist organizations, but which increasingly functions as a political weapon.

Since its launch in 2000, the number of groups labeled as hate groups has ballooned from 599–1,371. This dramatic increase does not reflect a sudden increase in extremism but, rather, SPLC's steady expansion of what it defines as hate, a definition that increasingly targets traditional Christian beliefs and conservative viewpoints.

Ms. Tyler, in your opinion is Alliance Defending Freedom a hate group?

Ms. TYLER. I don't work for SPLC. I wouldn't try to—

Mr. ONDER. I understand that. You came here today. You know what the title is, and you said some complementary things about SPLC in your written testimony. In your opinion, is ADF a hate group?

Ms. TYLER. I wouldn't use that term.

Mr. ONDER. Yes, I wouldn't either for an organization that argued 16 cases before the U.S. Supreme Court.

How about Turning Point USA, is Turning Point USA in your opinion a group?

Ms. TYLER. Again, I don't speak for SPLC. I don't—

Mr. ONDER. I am asking for you and your organization.

Ms. TYLER. My organization, I am here for my organization.

Mr. ONDER. Do you believe Turning Point USA is a hate group, Ms. Tyler?

Ms. TYLER. My organization doesn't label groups.

Mr. ONDER. OK, good.

Ms. TYLER. I don't.

Mr. ONDER. How about Family Research Council, is Family Research Council a hate group, Ms. Tyler?

Ms. TYLER. Same, same answer.

Mr. ONDER. OK. Is Focus on the Family a hate group?

Ms. TYLER. Same answer.

Mr. ONDER. How about Prager University?

Ms. TYLER. I don't. I don't have any of these labels for any of these organizations.

Mr. ONDER. OK. You talk a lot in here about what constitutes a hate group, and a White supremacist organization. Is Center for Immigration Studies a White supremacist organization?

Ms. TYLER. I am not familiar with that organization.

Mr. ONDER. No. How about Catholics who go to Latin Mass, are they a hate organization, are they haters by definition?

Ms. TYLER. No. I don't know what that is.

Mr. ONDER. Yes, I wouldn't think so. In your written testimony you said BJC has a consistent record of supporting both the First Amendment's religion clauses, no establishment and free exercise.

A little bit later you said our commitment to religious freedom stems from the historical experience of early Baptists.

You said, further, the government targeting nonprofits should be of concern to all Americans. Has your organization or you personally condemned the Biden Administration's targeting of Catholics who attend Latin Mass as hate groups?

Ms. TYLER. I don't understand the question.

Mr. ONDER. Oh. Well, the Biden Administration, as you may know, the Richmond Field Office targeted Latin Mass Catholics as a hate group. Their evidence for that was the Southern Poverty Law Center's suggestion that those Catholics were hate groups.

This is your wheelhouse here, right: Religious liberty—your testimony—government targeting of nonprofits. Have you or your organization condemned the SPLC and the Biden Administration for targeting Latin Mass Catholics?

Ms. TYLER. We speak consistently that religion should never be used as a proxy for threats.

Mr. ONDER. OK, thank you. Mr. Perkins, you don't think your organization, Focus on—or Family Research Council is a hate group?

Mr. PERKINS. No.

Mr. ONDER. Or Turning Point USA, or ADF?

Mr. PERKINS. No. None of those organizations. One of the things we all have in common: None of us advocate violence.

Mr. ONDER. In any of these organization, your own, any of the others that I just listed, have they ever committed arson, destroyed a police station, targeted a police officer or ICE agent maybe even overturned a patrol car?

Mr. PERKINS. No. We have been the target of violence.

Mr. ONDER. Indeed you have. Indeed you have. How do you explain this list that SPLC has that Ms. Tyler refuses to answer. She doesn't have an opinion as to whether your organization is a hate group. How do you explain that list?

Mr. PERKINS. Well, the difficulty is because it is not based on any type of action. It is based on ideology that Southern Poverty Law Center disagrees with.

Mr. ONDER. Ah.

Mr. PERKINS. Again, they have the freedom to speak and make lists. They could do it all day long.

It is when the government uses that list to marginalize citizens, you have taken a player and you have made them a referee.

Mr. ONDER. Isn't that why we are here today?

Mr. PERKINS. That is exactly why we are here.

Mr. ONDER. Because the Biden Administration used SPLC's hate list, Hate Map to target, among others, I am sure, I am sure—

Mr. PERKINS. Did the Obama Administration?

Mr. ONDER. Did the Obama Administration? That is what we are talking about. The SPLC, in collusion with government, targeting—

Mr. PERKINS. Yes, sir.

Mr. ONDER. —religious groups and political groups with which the Biden regime and the Obama regime disagreed. Well, thank you for your testimony. Thank you to all the witnesses for being here today. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Mr. ROY. I thank the gentleman from Missouri. I now recognize the Ranking Member of the Committee for U.C. advice.

Mr. RASKIN. Thank you very much. Just two things, Mr. Chair.

One is an article from April 18, 2024, *The New York Times*, "No bias found in FBI report on Catholic extremists." Also, Thomas Jefferson's letter to the Danbury Baptists.

Mr. ROY. Without objection. I will now recognize the gentlelady from Vermont for five minutes.

Ms. BALINT. Thank you so much, Mr. Chair.

We are here today because Republicans are uncomfortable that a nonprofit has labeled of their core organizations as hate groups. I would like to explore the facts and understand why the organizations sitting before us today, particularly, the Family Research Council, Mr. Perkins, may have been labeled a hate group by the SPLC.

The FRC was designated as an anti-LGBTQ hate group by SPLC in November 2010, for its dissemination of false and denigrating propaganda about gays and lesbians. The designation was based on FRC's pattern of spreading debunked claims linking homosexuality to pedophilia.

Mr. Perkins wrote that, "while activists like to claim that pedophilia is a completely distinct orientation from homosexuality, evidence shows a disproportionate overlap between the two. It is a homosexual problem."

Mr. Perkins also called the "It Gets Better" antibullying campaign, which is designed to save the lives of gay kids across this country who are being bullied mercilessly, he called it "disgusting and part of a concerted effort to persuade kids that homosexuality is OK, and actually to recruit them into that lifestyle."

I would like to say for the record, nobody recruited me. I would have loved to have had somebody actually talking to me about my experience.

Didn't happen. Doesn't happen. If that is not enough, we have documented connections that Mr. Perkins has appeared at organizations that have been supportive of White supremacist groups.

Look, the SPLC did not make up these designations out of thin air; we have the receipts. Just want to say that words matter. Accusations that an entire community is dangerous because of who they love makes LGBTQ Americans, who live in all our districts, every single district here, over nine percent of Americans identify as being part of the LGBTQ community. That makes all those people less safe. That's tens of millions of Americans. I am one of them.

As far as I know, I am the only one that I know of on this Committee that identifies. As I say, "that I know of," because the largest subsection of the LGBTQ community in this country is the bisexual subset of that organization. Again, that I know of.

I am curious, Mr. Perkins, are you familiar with the app Grindr? Mr. PERKINS. With what?

Ms. BALINT. The app Grindr. Are you familiar with the app Grindr?

Mr. PERKINS. No, I am not.

Ms. BALINT. You are not. OK, well, I will just say it is a gay dating app. I brought it up today because I am so sick of the hypocrisy coming from the other side of the aisle.

Did you know the Grindr app crashed at the RNC Convention in Milwaukee? Do you know it crashed again near the Charlie Kirk Memorial?

This is no slight to all those people who were there grieving. I am just saying this is the reality. In your own ranks, in your own offices there are gay Americans who desperately want you to stand up for them.

It is so disheartening over and over again to come into this Committee and be told that somehow, I don't have a right to be here. That somehow, I am making Americans less safe just by existing when tens of millions of Americans just want to live their life and be left alone. They want to be left alone. They don't want to have their lives dragged once again in front of this Committee.

Now, I appreciate your time being here today, but I wish that you would put your energy and focus on actually protecting Americans and not scapegoating individuals who are just trying to live their lives.

Ms. Tyler, thank you so much for joining us here today. We don't have that much time. I needed to get that off my chest.

How does scapegoating groups like the LGBT community that I am a part of fit into the authoritarian playbook? Because that is what concerns me.

Ms. TYLER. Scapegoating groups or marginalizing them, using dehumanizing language, that all tries to make an example of one particular group. It starts often with groups that have the least power in society and then goes from there.

As Americans, we should be about protecting every person in this country and making sure that all their civil rights and liberties are fully protected.

Ms. BALINT. That is right: We need to push back. I just want to say, Mr. Sypher, I believe it was you who said earlier that the majority of the country stands with you against same sex marriage.

The most recent Gallup Poll shows about 70 percent of this country supports same sex marriage. It has been holding steady at that number for quite a long time.

I yield back.

Mr. ROY. I thank the gentlelady from Vermont. I will now recognize the gentleman from Wisconsin for up to five minutes.

Mr. GROTHMAN. Thank you.

Mr. ROY. I will note that votes have been called. I am going to try to work out what the timetable is. To the extent that people want to speed things along, that may help us in our quest to finish before we have to go vote. I yield.

Mr. GROTHMAN. I will comment again briefly. The Chair pointed out an article in *Snopes*, "No, Trump did not call Neo-Nazis and White Supremacists very fine people."

I would have thought that was so well known by now. The only reason people would say that is they knowingly lied. They should be called out for knowingly lying.

Second thing in general, we talk about hate speech or hate crimes. Well, I am not sure either should be sanctioned outside of the crime itself or outside of the speech itself.

Do any of the witnesses, we can start with you, Mr. O'Neil, should there be something of hate speech or a sanction against something called hate speech? Should there be crimes with a separate penalty that is a hate crime as opposed to a crime?

Mr. O'NEIL. I am not here to testify on the specifics of hate crime law.

Mr. GROTHMAN. Any of you guys have a comment?

Mr. PERKINS. I believe we should focus on behavior and not ideology, and not beliefs.

Mr. GROTHMAN. Nobody wants to answer the question, do you?

Mr. SYPHER. More speech is a good thing.

Ms. TYLER. Hate speech is protected speech in the Constitution. Then, also speech that calls out hate speech must be protected.

Mr. GROTHMAN. At least you got the most conservative answer, I guess. OK, Mr. O'Neil, why was SPLC founder Morris Dees fired in 2017?

Mr. O'NEIL. Yes, it is an interesting thing to bring that up. It was 2019.

This is something our friends on the other side of the aisle seem not to remember. I think Mr. Cohen praised Morris Dees. Morris Dees had longstanding accusations of racial discrimination and sexual harassment.

It was in the context of that scandal that he was fired, that Richard Cohen, the long-term president of the Southern Poverty Law Center resigned, and that the Southern Poverty Law Center began the process of unionization which led to accusations of union busting last year and the ouster of their most recent president Margaret Huang.

Mr. GROTHMAN. OK. It is accurate to say that I guess you can describe Southern Poverty Law Center about five years ago as just a big moneymaking racket. Is that true?

Mr. O'NEIL. I would continue to describe it that way. It does do a few other things besides falsely defame conservatives and raise money by doing so, but that is the main proposition, value-add if you talk to donors.

Mr. GROTHMAN. With their endowment of \$700 million; right?

Mr. O'NEIL. What?

Mr. GROTHMAN. Their endowment is about \$700 million?

Mr. O'NEIL. Yes, \$786 million.

Mr. GROTHMAN. OK. Given the public record of retractions, settlements, and criticisms of Southern Poverty Law Center methodology, why do you believe so many—this is a really good one—why do you believe so many national news organizations rely on SPLC, given the blizzard of legal, I guess you call them malfeasance they have been involved in?

Mr. O'NEIL. It is a useful political weapon, not just for the legacy media but also for our friends on the other side of the aisle. It is also a useful weapon for Ms. Tyler here.

It was very interesting to me to hear her not stand by some of the accusations that Alliance Defending Freedom, and Family Research Council, and groups like that are hate groups, despite the fact that she is constantly using Christian Nationalism to demonize conservative positions.

Mr. GROTHMAN. OK. I tell you what, we are running out of time. Why don't I, we will give it back to you, Mr. Chair. You can take the two-minutes.

Mr. ROY. I will do that, I will yield the time if the gentleman is fine yielding time. I will recognize the gentlelady from California.

Ms. KAMLAGER-DOVE. Thank you, Mr. Chair. I will get right into it.

Ms. Tyler, historically the U.S. Government has not targeted conservative groups, it has targeted civil rights organizations like the NAACP, like Dr. King, like the Black Panthers, often labeling them as extremist or dangerous to justify surveilling them.

Mr. ROY. Would the gentlelady pause for one second? I apologize for interrupting her. I will make up the time.

Can I ask the witnesses really quick, we are trying to figure out. The vote has been called on the floor.

We either are going to have to suspend and come back around 5:00-ish to finish another 20-ish minutes of questions or we are going to have to somehow truncate it.

Are the witnesses able to stay and finish out at 5:00 p.m. for 30 minutes, if that is what we are going to have to do? Yes. OK. The gentlelady can proceed with her questions until we are done.

Ms. KAMLAGER-DOVE. OK. Labeling them as extremists or dangerous to justify surveilling and silencing them.

Ms. Tyler, how does today's rhetoric accusing civil society organizations of weaponization echo those past Government abuses used to silence or intimidate civil rights movements?

Ms. TYLER. Yes, I definitely see some historical analogues to what you are speaking of. What we are seeing now is even more extreme because we see it with this Congressional hearing, but also

with actions from the administration that seek to, again, with a very wide swath call out anything that falls into their view of being anti-Christianity or anticapitalism, for instance, or taking what they view to be extreme positions on gender or immigration, that those could be singled out as domestic terrorist organizations with the full freight of the government behind it to prosecute them in some way.

Ms. KAMLAGER-DOVE. Yes. In fact, Mr. O'Neil said a lot of things, but he did say that SPLC does a few other things. I want to talk about some of the few other things that they do, the great work.

They have a continuous history of exposing anti-Black violence and White supremacist movements while defending the rights of those targeted by discrimination. In 2024, for example, the SPLC protected the voting rights of more than 3,000 Georgia voters after Cobb County failed to send absentee ballots on time.

In Alabama they organized an unlawful voter purge that would have stripped more than 3,200 naturalized citizens of their right to vote.

Ms. Tyler, how do watchdog organizations that track extremism help to safeguard communities, especially those that have been historically targeted by hate groups?

Ms. TYLER. Civil rights organizations like SPLC draw awareness to hate groups and helps to warn communities ahead of time when there might be violent action.

It is important to civil society, including civil rights organizations play a vital role in the overall fabric of American society. We need to have strong public-private partnerships to keep all Americans safe.

Ms. KAMLAGER-DOVE. Absolutely. I have a few other questions for you. Would you say that the Cato Institute is like a Left-wing ANTIFA-allied organization? Would you categorize Cato as that?

Ms. TYLER. I would not.

Ms. KAMLAGER-DOVE. OK. I wouldn't either. They are libertarian at best.

Even the Cato Institute, I believe, released a report saying that since 1975 people motivated by hard-right ideologies have been responsible for 63 percent of politically motivated murder. How does that sound? Have you heard of that report?

Ms. TYLER. I have not.

Ms. KAMLAGER-DOVE. OK.

Ms. TYLER. I don't—it—

Ms. KAMLAGER-DOVE. We are going to trust Cato today. How about that? Even I am going to say that.

There was a killing of a representative from Minnesota, Ms. Hortman, who was killed alongside her husband and her dog. The police recovered many items of the person responsible for killing them. Maybe you have heard. Have you heard if they had also recovered materials that this person had belonging to SPLC or other Left-wing, Left-leaning organizations?

Ms. TYLER. I have not heard that.

Ms. KAMLAGER-DOVE. No, I haven't either. What I have heard is that the person was motivated by the false but racist Great Replacement Theory, conspiracy theory. In fact, had a list targeting other Democrats and wanting to go after them. In fact, it was a list

of 70 targets. Doesn't seem to me that was a person that was connected to, motivated by ANTIFA.

In fact, Ms. Tyler, I don't know if you know this, but the FBI actually took down, right, stopped working with both the SPLC and also the Anti-Defamation League. Did you know that?

Ms. TYLER. I learned that earlier in this hearing.

Ms. KAMLAGER-DOVE. What do you think about that?

Ms. TYLER. Well, that it is vital that our Government meet with a broad variety of organizations, especially those that are concentrating on rooting out White supremacy and anti-Semitism, to make all our communities safer.

Ms. KAMLAGER-DOVE. Well, I would think. I am going to enter into the record, Mr. Chair, because I know we are out of time.

Mr. ROY. Yep.

Ms. KAMLAGER-DOVE. "The Destruction of DOJ's Civil Rights Division: Why it Matters."

Mr. ROY. Without objection.

Ms. KAMLAGER-DOVE. I will yield back.

Mr. ROY. The gentlelady from California. I will recognize the gentleman from Texas for a few minutes.

Mr. GILL. Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thank you for holding this hearing and thank you to the witnesses for taking the time to be here and very eloquently explaining your position.

Ms. Tyler, I want to start with you. You have written pretty extensively about what you call White supremacy and Christian Nationalism. Is that correct?

Ms. TYLER. Yes. Most specifically Christian Nationalism.

Mr. GILL. Got it. Do you believe that White Christians are a problem?

Ms. TYLER. No.

Mr. GILL. You have written that—I have got an interview here, the transcript from an interview you gave in November last year with the *Interfaith Alliance* where you wrote, quote, or you stated, "White Christians have been more a part of the problem than a solution." That was in relation to your views on Christian Nationalism. Do you remember that?

Ms. TYLER. Yes. I am including myself; right? I am including, I am a White Christian, and I am saying that White Christians because—

Mr. GILL. That is because of views on Christian Nationalism; is that right?

Ms. TYLER. Yes, so.

Mr. GILL. OK. Did you know that 34 percent of Black Americans support "Christian Nationalism?" That number is 30 percent for White Americans?

Ms. TYLER. That Christian Nationalism is an ideology that every racial group, every religious group embraces or rejects to different extents.

Mr. GILL. Do you think that Black Christians are also a problem?

Ms. TYLER. I said no. When you asked me if White Christians—

Mr. GILL. You stated in this interview. I have the transcript here.

Ms. TYLER. Yes.

Mr. GILL. You stated in this interview that White Christians are a problem. I am asking you if you have the same view about Black Christians.

Ms. TYLER. White Christians have done more than other groups to perpetuate White Christian Nationalism. I include myself in that category.

Mr. GILL. Black Christians support Christian Nationalism at higher rates than White Christians, per the statistics that I just read.

Ms. TYLER. Christian Nationalism is an ideology that all different groups can reject.

Mr. GILL. Got it.

Ms. TYLER. That is one social—

Mr. GILL. I got it. No, no, no, my understanding is that the categorical, the categorical condemnation only applies to White Christians and not to Black Christians, that seems to be your testimony. Appreciate it.

Ms. TYLER. Most of my work is working with White Christians—

Mr. GILL. We have got limited; we have got limited time. I asked you about those. We have got limited time, so I want to move on here. I just wanted to clear that up, to make that very clear for everybody listening. Mr. Sypher, I want to thank you for being here. Has Turning Point USA ever advocated violence against innocent groups?

Mr. SYPHER. More speech is a good thing.

Ms. TYLER. Hate speech is protected speech in the Constitution. Then, also speech that calls out hate speech must be protected.

Mr. GILL. At least you got the most conservative answers, I guess.

Mr. SYPHER. Never.

Mr. GILL. Have they ever harbored, as an institution harbored racial animus against any group?

Mr. SYPHER. No. In fact, it is quite the opposite. Charlie would always say, disagreements come to the front. He wanted to talk with those that disagreed. He didn't want to talk to an echo chamber like we find so many places here in D.C.

Mr. GILL. Mr. Perkins, has Family Research Council ever advocated violence against any other group?

Mr. PERKINS. No.

Mr. GILL. Have they ever advocated racial animus or any other type of animus against any other group?

Mr. PERKINS. No. To the opposite.

Mr. GILL. Got it. Mr. O'Neil, I will end with you because we are trying to go quickly here. Why do you think that the SPLC labels or has labeled TP USA and the Family Research Council as hate groups?

Mr. O'NEIL. They are effective organizations on the opposite of the SPLC on various political and ideological issues.

Mr. GILL. Awesome. Thank you. Since we are out of time due to the votes, I will yield back, Mr. Chair.

Mr. ROY. I thank the gentleman from Texas for his indulgence. I will now recognize the Ranking Member for as much time as she needs, up to five minutes.

Ms. SCANLON. OK, thank you. I do think this has been a fascinating hearing in which there has been a number of attacks on a nonprofit rights organization which was not called to testify in its own defense. Certainly, we have heard a lot of pretty far-reaching and, apparently, inaccurate statements about that.

Ms. Tyler, I do appreciate the perspective you bring about the importance of our First Amendment, particularly with respect to the Establishment Clause and the Free Exercise Clause.

The district that I represent in Pennsylvania is the site where William Penn first landed to establish a community based on tolerance, especially for Quakers who were fleeing—a Christian group who were fleeing persecution in their homeland.

You have been asked a number of questions and you have referenced in your testimony doing work as Christians against Christian Nationalism.

Why is that important?

Ms. TYLER. I approach this both as a faithful Christian and patriotic American.

Ms. SCANLON. Uh-huh.

Ms. TYLER. As a Christian I view Christian Nationalism as a form of idolatry. It causes us to confuse political and religious authority and to potentially worship government over God.

I also see it as a gross distortion of the teachings of Jesus. Jesus who was all about love. That it turns the Gospel of Jesus into a false idol of power. As a Christian, I feel a calling to call out Christian Nationalism.

As a patriotic American I view it as a way that we are not being true to our constitutional values of religious freedom for all people.

As stated in the First Amendment, that people, regardless of religious identity, should all be equal in this country. That Christian Nationalism betrays that constitutional promise.

Ms. SCANLON. Thank you. I appreciate that. Because we have certainly over the course of this hearing heard a variety of opinions on things such as which form of Christianity is the right one or the one that we should be adhering to. We have certainly heard about it with respect to the abortion question. There is a variety of opinions on that issue among Christian and other sects.

We have seen it increasingly with respect to this Administration's immigration policies, that there is a wide variety of policies. As you suggested, with a loving God who counsels respect for the dignity of all people, we have seen some pretty strong statements from our Catholic hierarchy as well.

I do want to enter into the record several I offer for unanimous consent.

First, the December 15th letter to myself and Chair Roy from the Leadership Conference condemning this hearing.

Second, a December 16th letter from the Congressional Black Caucus expressing great concern about today's hearing targeting the Southern Poverty Law Center.

Third, an open letter from 3,000 coalition—a coalition of 3,000 nonprofit and nonpartisan organizations rejecting Presidential attacks on nonprofit organizations.

Fourth, a December 15, 2025, letter from the National Council of Nonprofits sharing their concern about the Subcommittee's hearing today.

Mr. ROY. Without objection.

Ms. SCANLON. OK. I would yield back.

Mr. ROY. I thank the gentlelady. I thank the gentlelady for limiting her time. I appreciate the witnesses' patience for coming here. We were a little late starting. I am only going to use about a minute here to wrap up with my normal questioning.

I think that a lot of the things that we wanted to illuminate have been illuminated. The only thing that I want to just finish here with is, and specifically for you, Mr. Sypher, given the circumstances of what occurred this year in September.

Is it your considered judgment, and the considered judgment of people that you associate with at TP USA that the focus by not just the Southern Poverty Law Center but by those that are trying to designate people for expressing free speech views and expressing their views on biblical principles or other principles that people find objectionable, that labeling that as hate, and specifically SPLC, do you believe that that created an environment that led to the attack on Charlie?

Mr. SYPHER. Most definitely. I find it ironic that a civil rights organization is marginalizing over half the country in their viewpoints.

On college campuses what you see is when people celebrate violence, as we saw post-assassination, it shows the sad state of this country. It means that communication and dialog is dying.

Charlie fought against that. That is why so many people craved coming to his "Prove Me Wrongs." That is why they craved to see him work through those thoughts with disagreeers. Because people need to talk for violence to be done away with.

Mr. ROY. Mr. Perkins, you stated earlier that it was your belief that the purpose of this hearing, as I share, was to focus on the extent to which not just the SPLC but generally when the government is then utilizing these organizations effectively as a tool to carry out its objectives, that that is now a different world. That is not just talking about speech, that has an oversight function for us to understand how that labeling has been having an effect on our legal system, on civil rights in general.

Is that correct?

Mr. PERKINS. It is correct. To Mr. Sypher's point, as the government elevates that voice and legitimizes that voice, the media takes it and runs with it.

The dialog that we had in this city and in this Nation 15, 20 years ago has ceased. It does lead to violence. The best way to stop violence is to have conversations and to allow people of differing views to speak, even when you disagree with them. That is what a healthy nation does.

The Southern Poverty Law Center is about silencing, not facilitating.

Mr. ROY. I thank you, Mr. Perkins.

Out of respect for my colleagues that shortened their time, I am going to do the same.

I appreciate the witnesses.

That concludes today's hearing. We thank the witnesses for appearing before the Subcommittee today.

Without objection, all the members will have five legislative days to submit additional written questions for the witnesses, or additional materials for the record.

Mr. ROY. Without objection, the hearing is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 4:38 p.m., the Subcommittee was adjourned.]

All materials submitted for the record by Members of the Subcommittee on the Constitution and Limited Government can be found at: <https://docs.house.gov/Committee/Calendar/ByEvent.aspx?EventID=118758>.

