



**Jewish Democratic
Council of America**

BEND THE ARC
jewish action

The Honorable Rand Paul, Ranking Member
U.S. Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship
428A Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Minority Members, Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship
U.S. Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship
428A Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

CC: The Honorable Benjamin Cardin, Chair
U.S. Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship
428A Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Majority Members, Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship
U.S. Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship
428A Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

August 11, 2021

**Re: National Multi-Coalition Movement of Organizations & Leaders Urge SBC
Republicans End Boycotts and Show Up To A Committee Vote on Nominee Dilawar Syed.**

Dear Ranking Member Paul and Minority Members of the Senate Small Business and
Entrepreneurship Committee,

On behalf of the Jewish Democratic Council of American, Bend the Arc: Jewish Action, and the
over 120 organizations and leaders representing a coalition of national and local multi-faith,
community, and civil rights organizations and leaders, we write today to demand that Republican
Members of the Senate Small Business and Entrepreneurship Committee (SBC) end their
boycotts of the Committee's consideration of Dilawar Syed's nomination to be the next Deputy
Administrator of the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA). In the wake of the COVID-19
crisis, the role of Deputy Administrator of the SBA is vital to the success of the SBA's critical
COVID-19 relief efforts to buttress the small business community across the country during this
unprecedented crisis. Continuing delay in considering Mr. Syed will affect countless small
businesses and livelihoods.

While we do not take positions on endorsements as a coalition, Mr. Syed's experience as an
entrepreneur, business executive, and civic leader clearly qualifies him to be considered for the
position. We also note the historic nature of his nomination. If Mr. Syed is confirmed, he will be
the highest-ranking Muslim American in the executive branch of the Biden administration.

Unfortunately, the delay of this confirmation has contributed to denying American small businesses – including tens of thousands of minority-owned businesses devastated by the pandemic – a full complement of qualified leaders at a key moment in the country’s recovery from COVID-19. As Mr. Syed testified during his confirmation hearing in your committee, “small businesses have been impacted to a far greater degree [during the COVID-19 crisis]....entrepreneurs in Black and Brown communities, rural and underserved regions need our commitment and support more than ever.” The longer the Senate delays its consideration of this nomination, the more severely hard-working Americans will suffer, at a time when they need our help most.

Shortly after Mr. Syed’s nomination was reported out of committee favorably on June 16th – with Republican support – an internal strategy email (circulated by a Republican Senator’s staffer) led with and noted Mr. Syed’s birth in a Muslim-majority country and his engagement with a Muslim American civic organization. In this correspondence, Mr. Syed’s heritage and faith were explicitly highlighted to imply allegations that are patently false and irrelevant.

This first-ever boycott in the history of the committee—representing a blatant attack on Mr. Syed’s background and faith—is deeply troubling and offensive. As organizations and leaders representing diverse backgrounds and movements, we are compelled to speak out and demand action when injustice is perpetrated. We strongly urge you to attend an SBC meeting convened to vote on the nomination of Dilawar Syed as Deputy Administrator of the Small Business Administration.

Sincerely,

Jewish Democratic Council of America
Bend the Arc Jewish Action
Center for American Progress
AAPI Victory Fund
Emgage Foundation Inc

Co-Signed Organizations:

AAPI NC
AAPI Victory Alliance
AAPI Victory Fund
Acacia Consultants LLC
Allegheny East Conference
America Indivisible
American Friends Service Committee
American Jewish Congress
American Muslim Empowerment Network (AMEN)
American Muslim Health Professionals (AMHP)
Americans for Peace Now
Auburn Seminary
Carolina Jews for Justice

Center for American Progress
Center for Disability Rights
Chinese Community Center, Houston
Demand Progress
Emgage Foundation Inc
Empowering Pacific Islander Communities (EPIC)
Good Citizen DFW
India Heritage Group
Indian American Impact
Indivisible Northern NV
Interfaith Alliance
Islamic Networks Group (ING)
Islamic Society of Greater Association
Jewish Community Action
Jewish Democratic Women's Salon, Atlanta (JDWS)
Keshet
Latter-day Saints for Biden-Harris
LGBTQ Task Force Action Fund
Liberty SDA church
Main Street Alliance
Mark McCleary Ministries
MomsRising
Moving Traditions
Muslim Advocates
Muslim Americans in Public Service
Muslim Public Affairs Council
National Coalition for Asian Pacific American Community Development
National Council on Independent Living
National Employment Law Project
National Iranian American Council
National Women's Law Center
NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice
NHDP AAPI Caucus
Northridge Indivisible
Pakistani American Voter Registration Initiative
Reconstructing Judaism
SABA-NC
Seek Jesus First Ministries
SEIU
The Daniel Initiative
The Fellowship of Affirming Ministries
The United Methodist Church - General Board of Church and Society
Us-Asia Links LLC
Win Without War
Women of Faith DFW
Woori Juntos

Co-Signed Community Leaders:

AJ Durrani, Empowering Communities Initiative (ECI)
Andrew Lachman, DNC Member and President DFI-CA, Democrats for Israel California
Aneelah Afzali, Esq., Executive Director, American Muslim Empowerment Network (AMEN)
Arsalan Suleman, Board Chair, America Indivisible
Aryani Ong, Senior Advisor, Indonesian American Democrats
Assembly Member David Chiu, California State Legislature
Bel Leong-Hong, Chair AAPI Caucus, Democratic National Committee
Breon Wells, Chairman, Economic Equity Roundtable
Charlotte Clymer
Christopher Kady, Lay Pastor, Seventh-Day Adventist Church
David Godwin, University of St Thomas
David Lee, AAPI Victory Fund Board Member
Dr Ronald Williams Jr, Center for Urban Bioethics at Temple University
Dr. Cora Quisumbing-King, NHDP AAPI Caucus
Dr. Nusrat Ameen, Senior Director-Legal Services, Daya Houston
Dr. Timothy Stewart, President, Progressive National Baptist Convention Inc.
Dr. Tyrone S. Pitts
Elizabeth Grossman
Hind Jarrah ,PhD , NTIC North Texas Islamic Council
Irene Natividad, President, GlobeWomen Research & Education Institute
Katie Kalvoda, Founder, Asian Americans Rising
Keisha E. McKenzie, PhD, Senior VP of Programs, Auburn Seminary
Keith Kamisugi
Lala Wu, Executive Director, Sister District
Luisa Blue, Service Employees International Union
Maeley Tom, Co-founder, Association of Asian American Investment Managers
May Y. Chen, Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance
Mayyer Thao, Board of Director, AAPI Coalition of Wisconsin
Michael Vazquez, Human Rights Campaign Religion & Faith Director
Naveed A. Shah, Common Defense
Neil Makhija, Executive Director, Indian American Impact
Pastor McCleary, Liberty 7th Day Adventist
Praveen Meyyan, Chair, Democratic Asian Americans of Virginia
Qaisar Q Imam, President, Asian American Pacific Islander American Public Affairs (APAPA)
Rabbi Amichai Lau-Lavie, Lab/Shul
Rabbi Andrea Goldstein, Congregation Shaare Emeth
Rabbi Daniel Bogard, Central Reform Congregation
Rabbi Dayle Friedman, Congregation Bet Haverim
Rabbi James M. Bennett, Congregation Shaare Emeth
Rabbi Jonah Dov Pesner, Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism
Rabbi Joshua Lesser, Congregation Bet Haverim
Rabbi Karen Bogard, Central Reform Congregation
Rabbi Nancy Kasten, Faith Commons
Rabbi Susan Talve, Central Reform Congregation

Rep. Nasif Majeed, NC House of Representatives Dist. #99
Representative Patrick Branco, Hawai'i State Legislature
Rev Dr Cassandra Gould, Executive Director, Missouri Faith Voices
Rev. Dr. Brian D. McLaren, Auburn Senior Fellows
Rev. Dr. Clay Brantley, Retreat House Spirituality Center
Ruthe Catolico Ashley, Executive Director Emeritus, California LAW
Senator Sheikh Rahman, Georgia State Senate
Sister Patricia Ridgley, Sisters of St Mary
Stephanie Chang, Michigan State Senator, District 1
Tung Nguyen, MD, AAPI Victory Fund, AAPI Victory Alliance
Unmi Song, President Lloyd A. Fry Foundation
Valarie Kaur , The Revolutionary Love Project
Valerie Habif, Co-Founder Jewish Democratic Women's Salon Atlanta (JDWS)
Varun Nikore, President, AAPI Victory Fund
Wendy Lewis, Children's Ministry Leader, Liberty S.D.A Church
Yvonne Y Lee, former commissioner, US Commission on Civil Rights

CC:

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Majority Leader
U.S. Senate
322 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Minority Leader
U.S. Senate
317 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510