

October 2011

Margo Schlanger
Officer for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties
Department of Homeland Security
Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties
131 M Street NE
Washington, DC

Dear Margo:

We are writing to follow up on a meeting request made at the last CRCL Committee meeting on September 26, 2011 to discuss the DHS "If You See Something, Say Something" campaign. As civil liberties, civil rights, human rights, immigrant rights, national security and privacy organizations, we are deeply concerned about how suspicious activity reporting programs, such as the DHS See Something, Say Something program lead to racial and religious profiling and impact Arab, Middle Eastern, Muslim, Sikh, and South Asian communities.

In particular, we would like to meet with you to discuss the campaign's protections against racial or other identity-based profiling as well as the privacy protections in place. We would also like to learn what mechanisms are in place to ensure compliance with civil rights protections as well as grievance procedures for individuals who have been discriminated against. We would also like to learn what policies DHS has employed to collect, retain, and purge data obtained through the campaign and how individuals can have inaccuracies removed from federal, state, local and private databases.

In addition, we would like to discuss what measures your office is taking to ensure accountability, transparency and oversight related to civil rights and civil liberties protections as DHS expands its work against domestic radicalization and "homegrown" terrorism.

We look forward to hearing from you and beginning a dialogue on these important and pressing civil rights and civil liberties issues. We appreciate your time and your commitment to engaging with us. If you have any questions or require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact Aadika Singh at 202-591-3308 or asingh@rightsworkinggroup.org.

Sincerely,

The American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee
The Arab American Institute
The Council on American-Islamic Relations
The Electronic Privacy Information Center
The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights
The Muslim Public Affairs Council
The Sikh American Legal Defense and Education Fund
The Sikh Coalition
South Asian Americans Leading Together
Rights Working Group
United Sikhs

Cc: Laura Olson
Cyrena Khoury