



Dear Ambassador Sam Brownback,

We pray that you and your loved ones are staying safe during this pandemic crisis.

We are reaching out to you in regards to the recently emerged social media posts from 2016 by Mark Kevin Lloyd, who was recently appointed to the position of religious freedom adviser for the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). In those old posts, Lloyd made reference to Islam as a “barbaric cult,” and insinuated that Muslims were the main perpetrators of gun violence in America.<sup>1</sup> Such views are unbecoming of any self-respecting person, no less somebody occupying the position of religious freedom adviser at USAID. Not only do those views betray the ideals of religious freedom, but they appear in direct contrast to the stated mission of USAID.

America has been, and will continue to be, the home of many Muslims. Our Supreme Court has a sculpture of history’s 18 greatest lawgivers on its wall that includes a depiction of Islam’s Prophet Muhammed. One of America’s preeminent founding fathers, Thomas Jefferson, studied the Qur’an as a law student, and his personal copy of Islam’s holy text is now housed at the Library of Congress. There are nearly 4 million Muslims in America, and researchers at Pew expect Islam to be the second-most populous religious demographic in America by 2050.<sup>2</sup>

As one of America’s oldest Muslim civic organizations, we implore you to call for Lloyd’s removal and to inform the Secretary of State and President of this request. His presence within USAID violates the principles of religious freedom you espouse through your position as Ambassador at Large for International Religious Freedom (IRF), and deteriorates the fabric of American pluralism IRF seeks to weave through its work. There should be a zero tolerance policy within the U.S. government for anti-Muslim sentiment, especially for those in a position of influence.

We do hope you take our concern very seriously, and we look forward to hearing back from your office.

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<sup>1</sup>Josh Rogin, “New USAID religious-freedom adviser has history of anti-Islam comments,” *The Washington Post* (May 27, 2020).

<sup>2</sup> Besheer Mohamed, “New estimates show U.S. Muslim population continues to grow,” *Pew Research Center* (January 3, 2018).

Regards,

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President  
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