

June 21, 2017

Mr. Jacob Harold
President and CEO
GuidestarUSA
1250 H Street, N.W.
Suite 1150
Washington, DC 20005

Dear Mr. Harold:

We, the undersigned organizations and individuals, write to express our strong disagreement with Guidestar's newly implemented policy that labels 46 American organizations as "hate groups." Your designations are based on determinations made by the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC), a hard-left activist organization. As such, SPLC's aggressive political agenda pervades the construction of its "hate group" listings.

The SPLC has no *bona fides* to make such determinations. It is not a governmental organization using a rigorous criteria to create its lists, and it is not a scientifically oriented organization. The SPLC is merely another "progressive" political organization. It gained credibility attacking Klansmen, neo-Nazis, and skinheads – many of whom were engaged in violence. The SPLC is now trying to export the same tactics into areas of mainstream political discourse including debates about immigration and sexual-identity politics.

The "hate group" list is nothing more than a political weapon targeting people it deems to be its political enemies. The list is ad hoc, partisan, and agenda-driven.¹ The SPLC doesn't even pretend to identify groups on the political left that engage in "hate." Mosques or Islamist groups that promote radical speech inciting anti-Semitism and actual violence are not listed by the SPLC even though many have been publicly identified *after terrorist attacks*. Radical, violent leftist environmentalists or speech suppressing thugs – like the rioting "antifa" movement – receive no mention from the SPLC.

Despite its denials to the contrary, this highly refined method of ostracism and dehumanization practiced by the SPLC isn't just about verbal debate – it can foreseeably lead to violence. The SPLC's primary goal is to achieve the political submission of its opponents, but its practice of sustained demonization in one's community – which is what a "hate map" is all about – inflames passions of hatred and animus against its targets. In one article, in addition to the text, the SPLC published caricatures of the women being discussed that were

¹ Laird Wilcox, "An Expert on Fringe Political Movements Reflects on the SPLC's Political Agenda: An Exclusive Interview with Author and Researcher Laird Wilcox," *The Social Contract* (Spring 2010): pp. 182-191.

distorted, disfiguring, and degrading.² This was done to rob them of their dignity and value as human beings. Worse yet, the article included the hometown of each woman – thereby endangering their safety.

Can it be of any surprise then that SPLC’s hate map was used by a political activist and domestic terrorist to perpetrate the very sort of hate crimes SPLC claims to oppose? In 2012, a shooter entered the Family Research Council headquarters in Washington, D.C., to “kill as many as possible” because SPLC had identified FRC as a “hate group,” and the killer-to-be relied on SPLC’s website to identify targets, according to his sworn testimony. The SPLC continues to list on its website people such as House Majority Whip Steve Scalise who was recently shot by James T. Hodgkinson who “liked” SPLC’s Facebook page. Does it not concern you that within the past five years, the SPLC has been linked to gunmen who carried out two terrorist shootings in the DC area?

Mr. Harold, we think it is a reasonable point that an aggressive political partisan like the SPLC should not be allowed to be the judge and jury of its opponents’ character and motivations. The fact that the SPLC only targets groups on the political right supports this contention. As Karl Zinsmeister notes, while it is entirely acceptable to disagree vigorously with one’s political opponents, it is “utterly unfair to insist they are hate criminals.” He reproduces a statement made by SPLC’s Mark Potok: “Sometimes the press will describe us as monitoring hate crimes and so on.... I want to say plainly that our aim in life is to destroy these groups, to completely destroy them.”³

With these points in mind, we respectfully request that Guidestar return to its prior, non-political approach to evaluating non-profit organizations.

Please send your reply within one week of receipt of this letter to: Mathew Staver, Post Office Box 540774, Orlando, FL 32854.

Respectfully,



Eunie Smith
President
Eagle Forum




Pamela Geller
President
American Freedom Defense Initiative

² Mark Potok and Janet Smith, “Women Against Islam,” Intelligence Report (Summer 2015).

³ Karl Zinsmeister, “Some People Love to Call Names,” Philanthropy Roundtable (April 2017)(http://www.philanthropyroundtable.org/topic/excellence_in_philanthropy/some_people_love_to_call_names).



Cathie Adams
First Vice President
Eagle Forum



Dale Wilcox
Executive Director and General Counsel
Immigration Reform Law Institute



Michelle Cretella, MD, FCP
President
American College of Pediatricians



LTG William Boykin, USA, Ret.
Executive Vice President
Family Research Council



Tom Benton, MD, MPH
Board of Directors
American College of Pediatricians



David Barton
Founder and President
Wallbuilders



Mathew Staver
Founder and Chairman
Liberty Counsel



Tim Barton
Wallbuilders



Brian Brown
President
National Organization for Marriage



The Honorable Edwin Meese III
Former Attorney General
President Ronald Reagan



Christopher Doyle, MA, LPC, LCPC
Co-Coordinator
National Task Force for Therapy Equality



Jessie Jane Duff
Senior Fellow
London Center for Policy Research

Brigitte Gabriel

Brigitte Gabriel
Founder and Chairman
ACT for America

CM Lopez

Clare M. Lopez
VP for Research and Analysis
Center for Security Policy

Tim Wildmon

Tim Wildmon
President
American Family Association

Sandy Rios

Sandy Rios
Director of Governmental Affairs
American Family Association

Ed Feulner

Edwin J Feulner, Ph.D.
President
The Heritage Foundation

T. Fitton

Tom Fitton
President
Judicial Watch

Joe Weasel

Joe Weasel
Executive Director
Full Story Foundation and Films

Allen Roth

Allen Roth
President
Secure America Now

Jake Hoffman

Jake Hoffman
Councilman
Town of Queen Creek, Arizona

James Simpson

James Simpson
Investigative Journalist
Crisisnow.net

Michael P. Farris

Michael P. Farris
President, CEO & General Counsel
Alliance Defending Freedom

Becky Gerritson

Becky Gerritson
President
Wetumpka TEA Party, Alabama



Lieutenant Colonel Allen B. West
US Army, Retired
Member, 112th US Congress



Andrea Lafferty
President
Traditional Values Coalition



Colin A. Hanna
President
Let Freedom Ring



Erick Erickson
Editor
The Resurgent



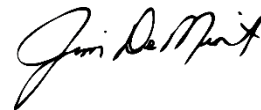
David Bozell
President
ForAmerica



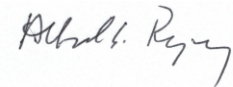
Michael Needham
CEO
Heritage Action for America



Michael Grebe



Jim DeMint
Former US Senator



Alfred Regnery
Chairman
Law Enforcement Legal Defense Fund



David E. Smith
Executive Director
Illinois Family Institute



Arthur Goldberg
Co-Director
Jewish Institute for Global Awareness



Elaine Silodor Berk
Co-Director
Jewish Institute for Global Awareness

The Honorable T. Kenneth Cribb, Jr.
Former Counselor
US Attorney General

Herman Pirchner, Jr.
President
American Foreign Policy Council

Diana Banister
President
Shirley & Banister Public Affairs