



**Shoulder to Shoulder**

*Standing with American Muslims; Upholding American Values*

April 14, 2016

Rep. Debbie Wasserman Schultz  
Chair, Democratic National Committee  
403 South Capitol Street SE  
Washington, DC 20003

Dear Representative Wasserman Schultz,

We, the leaders of a number of American religious denominations and faith-based organizations, have been disturbed by the increasingly negative and discriminatory rhetoric this campaign season, and particularly the bigoted rhetoric targeting our Muslim neighbors and community members. We write to urge the DNC to include, in your party platform, an explicit commitment to work against anti-Muslim bigotry and discrimination against religious minorities in the United States.

When candidates for the highest office in our nation suggest banning Muslims from the US, or registering Muslim citizens, or surveillance of mosques without warrant, we are compelled to lift our voices collectively to say that this exclusivist vision of America harms us all. As people of faith, we are pained by rhetoric that goes against the convictions of our own religious traditions, and as Americans we are alarmed by the way this discriminatory speech undermines the very ideals of religious freedom and pluralism that each and every one of our religious communities relies upon to thrive in our democracy.

It is incumbent upon our political parties to demonstrate their commitment to our shared American values of religious freedom, pluralism, and mutual respect among people of diverse faiths and ethnicities. They can accomplish this by taking an unambiguous stance against the anti-Muslim rhetoric that has become all too prevalent in the 2016 presidential campaign and which, if left unanswered, has the potential to distort and displace the values at the core of our national vision. We thank you for your consideration of our request that you integrate this commitment into your party platform.

Sincerely,

Rev. Ron Stief  
Chairperson, Shoulder to Shoulder

*Shoulder to Shoulder is a coalition of 32 religious denominations and organizations committed to standing with American Muslims to uphold American values.*