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January 16, 2024

United States Senate Committee on the Judiciary  
224 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Durbin, Ranking Member Graham, and Committee Members:

Coalition for Jewish Values, representing over 2,500 traditional, Orthodox rabbis in American public policy, writes to oppose the nomination of Adeel Abdullah Mangi to the United States Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit. Our opposition is grounded on Mr. Mangi's past association with and well-documented support for the Rutgers Center for Security, Race and Rights (the Center), and on his evasive responses when asked about antisemitic positions espoused by the Center.

Mr. Mangi states that the Center's director, Sahar Aziz, personally invited him to serve on its advisory board. When asked if he did due diligence before joining, Mr. Mangi averred that he "did not conduct research on events, speakers, or people that have nothing to do with [him]."<sup>1</sup> Yet the narrative presented by the Center is both robustly public and robustly antisemitic.

Ms. Aziz referred to Israel, a Jewish country located in the Jewish homeland (as documented in history's best-selling book), as an "occupying force in Palestine," and praised the "Palestinian struggle to resist violent occupation ... of Israeli settler colonialism." Questioned about these sentiments, Mr. Mangi responded that these are part of a "very complex history."<sup>2</sup>

Sen. Josh Hawley repeatedly gave Mr. Mangi the opportunity to condemn the Center Director Aziz's assertion that Israel is a "violent, settler, colonialist state." He repeatedly declined to do so.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> "Adeel Abdullah Mangi Written Questions and Responses for the Record." U.S. Senate Committee on the Judiciary, December 13, 2023. Accessed January 15, 2024. [https://www.judiciary.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/2023-12-13\\_-\\_qfr\\_responses\\_-\\_mangi.pdf](https://www.judiciary.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/2023-12-13_-_qfr_responses_-_mangi.pdf). Senator Lindsay Graham: Questions for the Record. Mr. Adeel Abdullah Mangi, nominated to serve as U.S. Circuit Judge for the Third Circuit.

<sup>2</sup> Cruz, Ted (@SenTedCruz). 2023. "Video Posted on X by @SenTedCruz." X, December 18, 2023, 3:49 PM. Accessed January 15, 2024. <https://twitter.com/SenTedCruz/status/1736851124353650807?t=JosunWjei7GZKu58zIRRSQ&s=08>.

<sup>3</sup> Hawley, Josh (@HawleyMO). 2023. "Video Post on X by @HawleyMO." X, December 13, 2023, 1:17 PM. Accessed January 15, 2024. <https://twitter.com/HawleyMO/status/1735000883765584332?t=IsWrlrqwxuq5eiEs0KbOzw&s=08>.

Mr. Mangi responded in written testimony to Sen. Graham that he was unaware that the Center held an event entitled *"The Hundred Years' War on Palestine: A History of Settler Colonialism and Resistance, 1917–2017"* while he was serving on its board. He did say, however, that he knew that Professor Rashid Khalidi of Columbia University, "who wrote a book with the [same] title," would be delivering a lecture at the Center.<sup>4</sup> The fact that the Center promoted antisemitic propaganda, to the point of blaming Jews for the hatred directed against them, apparently gave Mr. Mangi no pause.

When asked about several other of the Center's more problematic events, speakers, and programs, Mr. Mangi denied knowledge of these activities. Despite this avowed ignorance about the Center's work, he nevertheless donated \$6,500 to the institution. He also received and transmitted requests for his law firm, Patterson Belknap Webb & Tyler LLC, to fund law fellows at the Center. The firm gave \$13,000; the Center website honors Patterson Belknap, using its logo, as a "Law Fellow Sponsor."

The Jewish community's criticism of the Center and its leadership has been frequent and vociferous. Dov Ben-Shimon, CEO of the Jewish Federation of Greater MetroWest New Jersey, wrote that Director Aziz "regularly and consistently promoted vile antisemitic propaganda on her private social media pages."<sup>5</sup> Representative Josh Gottheimer called it "unconscionable" that the Center would "provide a platform to those affiliated with Palestinian Islamic Jihad."<sup>6</sup> Aziz is personally named in a recent lawsuit accusing Rutgers of "toleration of bullying, harassment, discrimination and retaliation against Jewish students," describing her as having "callously and recklessly endorsed denials of the October 7th terrorist attack."<sup>7</sup>

Again, Mr. Mangi would have us believe that he joined the board of the Center, donated \$6,500 for "academic research" by the Center, encouraged his law firm to give twice that amount for Law Fellowships, but had no idea what the Center and its director were actually doing.

It is unconscionable that even certain Jewish groups have attempted to tie questions based upon Mr. Mangi's association with the Center to his Muslim faith. The American Jewish Committee asserted that Mr. Mangi was "questioned aggressively on thin pretext about his views on Israel, terrorism, and antisemitism, turning these serious issues into a tool of partisan attack."<sup>8</sup> And the ADL (Anti-Defamation League) claimed that Mr. Mangi received "inappropriate and prejudicial treatment... with endless questions that appear to have been motivated by bias towards his

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<sup>4</sup> "Adeel Abdullah Mangi Written Questions for the Record." Senator Lindsay Graham: Questions for the Record. Mr. Adeel Abdullah Mangi. Page 9.

<sup>5</sup> Ben-Shimon, Dov. "Rutgers University / Call to Action." Jewish Federation of Greater Metrowest NJ, November 30, 2023. Accessed January 15, 2024.

<https://www.jfedgmw.org/rutgers-university-call-to-action>.

<sup>6</sup> Gottheimer, Josh. "Rep. Josh Gottheimer's 2021 Speech at Rutgers University," December 2021.

<https://jewishinsider.nyc3.digitaloceanspaces.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/14065152/Gottheimer-Rutgers-Speech.pdf>.

<sup>7</sup> Yoel Ackerman v. Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey; Rutgers Law School, a/k/a Rutgers-Newark Law School; Katherine Perez; Erica D. Williams; Sarah Regina; Johanna Bond; John and Jane Does 1-100; and ABC CORPS. 1-100 (Superior Court of New Jersey January 2, 2024).

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.ajc.org/news/ajc-statement-on-questioning-of-adeel-mangi-at-senate-judiciary-hearing>

religion.”<sup>9</sup> These, in combination with other statements, were used by partisans on the Judiciary Committee to assert senators had adopted “blatantly Islamophobic lines of questioning.”<sup>10</sup>

None of the foregoing statements provided even a single example of a challenging question posed to Mr. Mangi that was unrelated to the antisemitic positions, statements, and activities of the Center or its director. To level false charges of “Islamophobia” to shield a candidate from association with antisemitic bias, and even to malign those who criticize that association, is the very antithesis of the purpose for which the ADL was founded. Indeed, in a less politically charged situation, ADL CEO Jonathan Greenblatt praised Representative Gottheimer’s aforementioned address, calling it an “important speech ... on [the] rise of antisemitic rhetoric and the need for leaders to better support Jewish communities.”<sup>11</sup>

The left-wing Jewish organizations lining up to back Mr. Mangi’s nomination<sup>12</sup> do not represent the consensus of American Jewry, much less its rabbinic leadership. Mr. Mangi’s alliance with the Center raises genuine concerns about his judgment and his commitment to American principles. Those concerns have nothing to do with his religious background or faith.

We believe these concerns to be sufficiently grave that we urge the committee to await a more suitable candidate, untainted by associations with antisemitic organizations, especially at a time when antisemitic hatred is openly displayed in a fashion which Americans have not seen since the Nazi era.

Yours Sincerely,



Rabbi Yaakov Menken  
Managing Director  
Coalition for Jewish Values

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<sup>9</sup> “ADL Statement on the Mistreatment of Adeel Mangi at Senate Judiciary Hearing.” Anti-Defamation League, January 9, 2024. Accessed January 15, 2024. <https://www.adl.org/resources/press-release/adl-statement-mistreatment-adeel-mangi-senate-judiciary-hearing>.

<sup>10</sup> “Jewish Groups Underscore Support for Adeel Mangi to Serve as Circuit Court Judge.” U.S. Senate Committee on the Judiciary, January 10, 2024. Accessed January 15, 2024. <https://www.judiciary.senate.gov/press/releases/jewish-groups-underscore-support-for-adeel-mangi-to-serve-as-circuit-court-judge>.

<sup>11</sup> Greenblatt, Jonathan (@JGreenblattADL). 2021. “Post on X by @JGreenblattADL.” X, December 14, 2021, 3:19 PM. Accessed January 15, 2024. <https://twitter.com/JGreenblattADL/status/1470851033307877376?s=20>.

<sup>12</sup> “Jewish Groups Underscore Support for Adeel Mangi to Serve as Circuit Court Judge.” U.S. Senate Committee on the Judiciary, January 10, 2024. Accessed January 15, 2024. <https://www.judiciary.senate.gov/press/releases/jewish-groups-underscore-support-for-adeel-mangi-to-serve-as-circuit-court-judge>.