

September 15, 2003

The Honorable John Hostettler
Chairman
Subcommittee on Immigration, Border Security, and Claims
B370B Rayburn House Office Building
House Committee on the Judiciary
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Hostettler:

As religious, civil liberties, human rights and other American civic organizations, we are writing concerning the plight of Durreshahwar (Duri) Hasan, and her four daughters Anum, Iqra, Nida, and Asna. Duri's husband Waqar, a Pakistani immigrant, was murdered four days after 9/11 in a brutal hate crime. On September 15, 2001, Mark Anthony Stroman shot Mr. Hasan to death at a convenience store in Dallas claiming that he "did it to retaliate on local Arab Americans or whatever you want to call them." He added that he "did what every American wanted to do but didn't." Stroman was convicted of murder and is now on death row in Texas. As a result of Waqar's death, his family now faces removal from the United States unless Congress acts to permit them to remain in their adopted homeland.

Though he did not die at the World Trade Center, Waqar should certainly be considered a victim of September 11th. Unlike the families of other immigrant victims of 9/11, however, the Hasan family was not granted special immigrant status that would allow them to remain on the road to citizenship and avoid deportation. After building a life in this country for nine years, the Hasan family has gone from being one step away from permanent residency to one step away from deportation.

Given the unique and tragic circumstance of this family, we urge you to bring H.R. 867 before the Subcommittee, and to support its expeditious enactment. This crucial legislation, introduced by Representative Rush Holt, would provide immigration relief for the Hasans, and would avert a second victimization of this innocent family.

The Hasan story in America began in 1993 when Waqar Hasan came to this country in search of a better life for his family. One year later, he brought his wife and daughters to join him – settling near relatives in Milltown, New Jersey, where Waqar worked at and helped manage nearby service stations. In the fall of 2001, Waqar traveled to Dallas temporarily to help his brother run a newly established convenience store. Tragically, he was murdered before he could be reunited with his family.

At the time of his murder, Waqar and his family had greencard applications for permanent residency pending with the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service. But unless H.R. 867 is enacted, the only hope of the Hasan family staying in America will have died with their husband and father. While nothing can be done to return Waqar Hasan to his family, this legislation can prevent the further injustice of the deportation of his wife and children.

Mr. Chairman, our nation must remain true to our core humanitarian principles as we confront terrorism wherever it exists. We must therefore act in every way possible to oppose retaliatory violence and revenge killings. Your action to support H.R. 867, and to ensure that the Hasan family can remain part of the American community, would be a crucially important statement in opposition to hate-crimes and in defense of American unity in the face of terrorist violence.

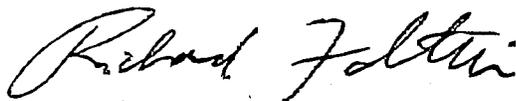
Sincerely,



Leonard Glickman
President & CEO
Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society



Dr. James Zogby
President
Arab American Institute



Richard T. Foltin
Legislative Director and Counsel
American Jewish Committee



Bishop Melvin Talbert
Ecumenical Office of the Senate of Bishops of
the United Methodist Church



Dan Mariaschin
Executive Vice President
B'nai B'rith International



Salam Al-Marayati
Executive Director
Muslim Public Affairs Council



Rabbi Marla Feldman
Director of the Commission on
Social Justice of Reform Judaism



Rev. Bob Edgar
General Secretary
National Council of Churches



Mary Rose Oakar
President
American Arab Anti-Discrimination
Committee



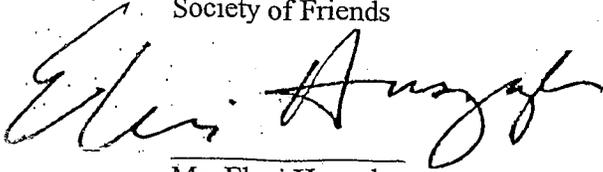
Jess N. Flordes
Washington Director
Anti-Defamation League



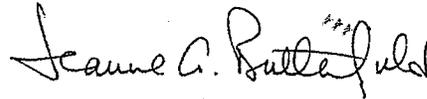
Thomas Jeavons
General Secretary
Philadelphia Yearly Meeting of the Religious
Society of Friends



Robert Kestenbaum
Executive Director
Workmen's Circle/Arbeter Ring



Ms. Eleni Huzagh
President
National Council of Churches



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Faiz Rehman
President
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