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CAIR-Chicago, Hughes Socol Law Firm Sue USCIS, DHS Over Secret Citizenship Vetting Program

(CHICAGO, IL, 5/1/2018) – The Chicago office of the Council on American-Islamic Relations (**CAIR-Chicago**), in conjunction with the law firm **Hughes Socol Piers Resnick and Dym, Ltd. (HSPRD)**, today announced the filing of a federal lawsuit against the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) and the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) seeking documents related to a secret government vetting program for citizenship applicants.

CAIR-Chicago says the Controlled Application Review & Resolution Program (CARRP) imposes additional rules and review criteria that delay and deny applicants immigration benefits, with little to no public transparency, review, or accountability.

"This program, started a decade ago in secrecy, and never having the benefit of public scrutiny, undermines the credibility and efficacy of the agency's efforts to properly vet applicants for citizenship, and erodes the public's confidence in a system that is supposed to be administered in a fair, just, and transparent manner for all who apply," said **Phil Robertson, Litigation Director for CAIR-Chicago**.

"We know that through the CARRP program, instituted without Congressional approval, U.S. Citizenship & Immigration Services causes inordinate delays on applications from Muslim immigrants," explained **Zachery Taylor, a civil rights fellow at CAIR-Chicago**.

On August 1, 2017, **CAIR-Chicago** submitted a Freedom of Information Act request seeking the release of records regarding processing times and demographic information for those individuals who have applied for citizenship since the institution of CARRP in April 2008. USCIS and DHS have failed to provide any documents in response to the August 2017 FOIA request, and have denied requests to expedite the processing for the records sought.

"Under the CARRP program, Muslim applicants for various immigration benefits, including those seeking to naturalize as American citizens, have had their applications delayed and ultimately denied without legal authority, and without even being informed of the existence of the program," stated **Chirag Badlani of HSPRD**. "The information sought will shed light on the impact of this unlawful program."

CAIR-Chicago is represented in this action by **Phil Robertson of CAIR-Chicago, and Kalman Resnick and Chirag Badlani of HSPRD**.

CAIR-Chicago is the Chicago office of America's largest Muslim civil liberties and advocacy organization. Our mission is to defend civil rights, fight bigotry, and promote tolerance.

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