

December 1, 2006

Representative-Elect Keith Ellison
C/O Ellison for Congress Committee
PO Box 11818
Minneapolis MN 55411
VIA FACSIMILIE AND US MAIL



Dear Mr. Ellison:

On behalf of The Interfaith Alliance (TIA), and our 185,000 members nationwide, I write to congratulate you on your election to Congress and to welcome you to Washington. TIA is a nonpartisan organization made up of individuals from more than 75 different religious traditions as well as members who choose no religion.

I am saddened and angered – but, unfortunately, not surprised – by the turmoil touched off by Dennis Prager’s self-righteous screed titled “America, Not Keith Ellison, Decides What Book a Congressman Takes His Oath On.” As you well know, upon hearing the news that you will take your oath of office on the Koran, Mr. Prager said that your act “undermines American civilization,” and that when a Congressman is taking an oath of office, “America is interested in only one book, the Bible.”

Obviously, Mr. Prager has little faith in American civilization and underestimates the American people. His seriously skewed view of religious liberty, tolerance and constitutionality shows a gross misunderstanding of our history, including the very principles upon which this nation was founded. And I can assure you that most Americans are not interested in only one book. We passionately believe in religious freedom and we respect the beliefs of others as well as the sacred scriptures of all religions.

I will address Mr. Prager’s uninformed statements on this Sunday’s *State of Belief*, the weekly radio program produced by The Interfaith Alliance Foundation and broadcast on Air America Radio at 6:00p.m. Eastern.

Our members look forward to your swearing in as a great moment in American history, and I hope we will be able to find ways to work together to protect the religious liberties of all Americans. Mr. Preetmohan Singh of our public policy department will be contacting your staff soon to offer our cooperation and to introduce you to our programs, based on the principle that America is “One Nation, Many Faiths.”

I also hope you will consider being a guest on *State of Belief* at your earliest convenience.

Warm Regards,



Rev. Dr. C. Welton Gaddy
President, The Interfaith Alliance
Pastor for Preaching and Worship, Northminster (Baptist) Church (Monroe, LA)

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