



ANNUAL REPORT

2019





Wa'el Alzayat
Chief Executive Officer

2019 was a reminder of the importance of effective and sustained advocacy. From fighting to repeal the Muslim Ban and confronting hate to defending the human rights of Muslim minorities abroad, our local and national legislative work is more important than ever.

Emgage was a leading member in a coalition in support of the NO BAN Act, which would amend the Immigration and Naturalization Act to prohibit discrimination on the basis of religion. Through our strong in-district engagement, we were able to help secure 207 co-sponsors to this important bill. Our goal in 2020 is to bring the bill to a House vote and eventually a vote in the Senate. Emgage Action also led efforts to address the terrible human rights violations inflicted by the Chinese Communist Party on the indigenous Muslim population of China, where as many as one million Uyghurs are held in detention in a web of concentration camps and stripped of their right to practice their religion freely. Emgage Action worked with prominent Uyghur activists to meet with lawmakers in the executive and legislative branches and launched a campaign to boycott the 2022 Winter Olympics in Beijing. Moreover, we worked with Senator Marco Rubio's office in support of the Uyghur Human Rights Policy Act of 2019, which would sanction Chinese officials



Khurrum Wahid
Chairman of the Board

responsible for these abuses. As of this writing, the bill has passed both the House and the Senate, and we are optimistic for its adoption into law in 2020. Emgage Action also worked on another acute human rights situation affecting Muslim minorities abroad. We successfully advocated for House passage of the Burma Act, which would sanction Burmese officials for the Rohingya Genocide that has nearly wiped out the Muslim population of Burma. Next step will be passage by the Senate and adoption into law in 2020. Emgage Action also worked on opposing efforts to stifle the free speech of Americans who wish to exercise their constitutionally protected right to boycott governments on moral grounds.

We also engaged members of Congress on the critical needs of Palestinians and the importance of restoring funding to the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA). Following the cutting of U.S. contributions to the agency by the Trump Administration, millions of Palestinian refugees, including children, are at risk.

Emgage Action will continue to prioritize these and other issues that are critical to Muslim Americans in 2020 and beyond. If you care about this work, please consider supporting Emgage Action.



Bringing the change we need requires proactive and consistent civic participation. Engagement requires an understanding of the political process, how to engage with elected officials, and how to form partnerships with other constituencies in support of common policy positions.

Emgage Action is a 501(c)4 that implements an ecosystem of programs to mobilize Muslim Americans to advocate and engage on issues with their public officials at the local, state, and federal levels that define who Muslim Americans are by what they stand for.

Emgage Action engages on these issues at the local, state, and federal levels through organizing Hill Days, Capitol Days, and regularly connecting community members to lawmakers to discuss common sense solutions to some of our nation's biggest challenges.



NO BAN Act

Ending the Muslim Ban

From the first executive actions in 2017 to the Supreme Court of the United States (SCOTUS) ruling, Emgage Action worked tirelessly to repeal the discriminatory Muslim Ban.

The NO BAN Act is a comprehensive bill which would effectively end the Muslim Ban and the scourge of religious discrimination in immigration. If passed, the NO BAN Act repeals every iteration of President Donald J. Trump's Muslim, refugee and asylum bans. And most importantly, the bill amends the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA) to prohibit discrimination on the basis of religion and ensure that no president will ever again be able to ban an entire community without accountability.

After engagement with Congress, Representative Judy Chu (D-CA-27) and Senator Chris Coons (D-DE) introduced the NO BAN Act (H.R. 2214 and S. 1123). Since the introduction, there has been a collective effort by a broad coalition of Muslim American organizations to amplify, secure co-sponsors, and advocate for the passage of this Act.

On September 24, Emgage Action submitted a statement for the record at the first hearing held by Congress on the Muslim Ban. The joint hearing included members from the House Judiciary Subcommittee on Immigration and the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Oversight. The in-district efforts by Emgage Action chapters were vital in securing co-sponsors. At the end of 2019, through the efforts of national, chapters and coalition partners 207 members of Congress co-sponsored the NO BAN Act.



Protecting Uyghur Human Rights

In 2019, Senate Bill 178 and House Bill 649, the Uyghur Human Rights Policy Act of 2019 was introduced by Senator Marco Rubio (R-FL) and Representative Christopher Smith (R-NJ-4) in their respective chambers.

This legislation condemns the Chinese state's gross violations of human rights happening against the ethnic minority Uyghurs. It calls for the end of their arbitrary detention, torture, and harassment, and imposes economic sanctions against key Chinese officials in accordance with the Global Magnitsky Act.

The crackdown on Muslims in China has brought about concentration camps to "re-educate" Uyghurs. Nearly three million Uyghurs have been subjected to unspeakable tortures in these camps, with an estimated one million currently being held. With over 85 camps, Uyghurs were kept in overcrowded prison cells,

interrogated by Chinese officials, beaten, put into forced labor, and stripped of their cultural and religious identities. Uyghurs living outside of China fare no better; many are missing family members, and international students risk being deported back to China.

In an effort to advocate for the Uyghur community, Emgage Action organized numerous meetings with key stakeholders on these bills. Our most vital impact included bringing affected community leaders to Capitol Hill and to the State Department to advocate on behalf of their missing family members. On December 4, the Senate and House both passed S. 178.

The bill will go through further negotiations and Emgage Action will continue to advocate for the legislation to be brought to a final passage in 2020.



Protecting Religious Freedoms for the Rohingya

Since August 2017, the Burmese military with the tacit support of the Burmese government has ethnically cleansed over 680,000 Rohingya and forced them to relocate to neighboring Bangladesh. Between August 25, 2017 and September 24, 2017, at least 6,700 Rohingya have been killed, including 730 children, while 2,700 others have died from disease and malnutrition.

The Rohingya are an ethnic minority in Burma, estimated at one million. They mostly reside in the western Rakhine State where they account for nearly a third of the population. While the Rohingya can trace their origins in the region to the fifteenth century, both the Burmese military and government refute the Rohingya's historical claims and deny them recognition as one of the country's 135 ethnic groups.

Rohingya minorities continue to be targets of systematic violence, crimes against humanity, and genocide committed by the Burmese Military. This is why Emgage Action has advocated to pass Senate 1186 and House Bill 3190, the BURMA Act, which imposes targeted sanctions against military leaders responsible for the unspeakable acts of violence against the Rohingya and other ethnic minorities in Burma. On September 25, the House passed their version of the bill and it is currently awaiting markup in the Senate.

A group of diverse people, including men and women of various ethnicities, are gathered for a protest. They are holding a large blue banner with white text that reads "No Attacks On Muslims" and "Refugees Welcome Here". Some individuals are also holding smaller signs, one of which says "BLACK LIVES MATTER". The background is slightly blurred, showing more people and signs.

Improving Hate Crime Data

Engage Action pushes to tackle the threat of hate crimes and white supremacy.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) is required by law to report hate crimes annually, but due to fear of reporting by victims, ambiguous guidelines on what constitutes a hate crime, voluntary reporting, and agencies simply choosing not to report, we believe the data on hate crimes is unreliable. Without accurate numbers, the government has no way of effectively providing solutions to combat a worrying rise in unreported hate crimes.

Crimes motivated by race, color, religion, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, or disability of the victim pose a serious national problem and Congress has an obligation to pursue better reporting.

The NO HATE Act was previously introduced in the 115th Congress but it failed because of a lack of bipartisan support. However, after multiple advocacy organizations, including Engage Action, lobbied Congress to address the rise in hate crimes, Democrats and Republicans worked together to re-introduce the NO HATE Act, which if enacted, this legislation would provide needed improvement to data-reporting mechanisms.

A person is seen from the back, holding a large Israeli flag (white with green and red horizontal stripes and a blue triangle at the top) against a backdrop of a cityscape under a cloudy sky. The person is wearing a patterned sweater.

Constitutional Freedoms and Safeguarding Human Rights

In the 116th session, Senator Marco Rubio (R-FL) introduced S. 1 - Strengthening America's Security in the Middle East Act. Title 4 of the bill included a provision that gave states the legal authority to penalize companies that choose not to do business with Israel or with Israeli-owned enterprises. Emgage Action fully opposed the provision due to infringement on the First Amendment, which protects political expression and does not prohibit any form of political boycott, regardless of the target.

In addition, Emgage Action supported legislation introduced by Representative Betty McCollum (D-MN-4), H.R. 4391 - Promoting Human Rights by Ending Israeli Military Detention of Palestinian Children. This act addresses the issue of human rights violations, but also ensures that U.S. taxpayer funds are not used to support the military detention of Palestinian children. As Americans, it is extremely important that our money does not facilitate the ill treatment of children anywhere in the world, no matter what other interests are at play.

Furthermore, In September 2018, President Donald Trump announced that he would end U.S. aid to the Palestinian refugee agency. The U.S. is the largest single donor to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA) with \$364 million in funding. UNRWA provides vital life-saving services, health care, and education to stateless refugees in the Middle East, and after this decision by Trump, the agency was left scrambling for funds. Emgage Action worked closely with UNRWA's leadership in Washington, DC to advocate for these funds to be reinstated.



Events



As an official member of the U.S. Council of Muslim Organizations (USCMO), Emgage Action organized and participated in the 5th Annual Muslim American Advocacy Day from April 1-2, 2019.

Over 500 community members, representing 28 states, met with over 250 officials - making this one of the most successful events to-date.

Our advocates lobbied for issues pertaining to the Muslim Ban, immigration reform, human rights in Burma and China, and a resolution recognizing the history of Muslims in the United States.

Engage 2019 Congressional Reception for 116th Congress

In the spring, we hosted a Congressional reception celebrating our 116th Congress. Our event was a major success with over 150 attendees, including elected officials, congressional staffers, community leaders, and **committed members like you.**

On behalf of our entire organization, we want to thank **Rep. Debbie Murcarsel-Powell** (FL-26), **Rep. Andy Kim** (NJ-3), **Rep. Tom Malinowski** (NJ-7), **Rep. Rashida Tlaib** (MI-13), **Rep. Andy Levin** (MI-9), and **Rep. Darren Soto** (FL-9) for attending and speaking at our reception.



"We are with you, we are on your side, you are not alone, you need to speak up, and that's what Emgage is all about," said Congressman Soto. Each representative echoed the same message of elevating and empowering our communities, and promoting policies that reflect the inclusivity of our great nation.



Engage Muslim American Leadership Summit

San Francisco

Engage hosted its first Muslim American Leadership Summit in San Francisco as part of an initiative to engage new communities around the country. The summit featured well-known speakers such as **Jamiah Adams, Farhana Khera, and Mehdi Hasan.**

The day-long retreat focused on our community's role in shaping civic and political spaces, how we can harness strategies and tools to build power, and leading policy discussions on topics such as the 2020 Census. Leaders from the business, non-profit, and political world shared experiences and best practices for successful Get Out The Vote operations, and organizing around issues that affect us all.



Our team is grateful to all those who joined us for this historic gathering. We are also thankful to Dilawar Syed, our Bay Area Board member, who drove this new strategic initiative, and to all of our passionate staff and volunteers.



AJ Durrani,
Emgage



Jamiah Adams,
NextGen



Farhana Khera,
Muslim Advocates



“We can laugh at the absurdity of this President, but the reality is that there is nothing funny about relentless racism and incitement to violence... **Now is the time for us all to be active in public life and to support orgs like Emgage.**”

— Mehdi Hasan,
Award Winning Journalist



Engage in the Media

Emgage has had an extraordinarily busy year in terms of the press, with our media mentions absolutely flourishing.

We are proud to have been highlighted by top national and international outlets, thereby allowing our voice to be reached by wider audiences.



Engage in the Media

ALJAZEERA News • AJ Impact AJ Go • Documentaries • Shows • Inv

NEWS / ISLAMOPHOBIA

Muslim Caucus highlights need for greater political engagement

Two-day Muslim Caucus conference focused on communicating no Muslim politician should be reduced to their faith alone.

by Martin de Bourmont

24 Jul 2019

"This is 10 years late," said Mohammed Gula, executive director for Virginia of Emgage, an organisation seeking to encourage and support Muslims who wish to enter politics.

"It's also important to recognise that we've really felt that there was space for us to be heard [before]," Gula told Al Jazeera, adding that the election of President Donald Trump, who has instituted a travel ban on a number of countries, has given a sense of urgency to Muslim political engagement.

THE NEW REPUBLIC

Democrats Need to Decide Whether They Care About Muslim Voters

Candidates have been cautious when it comes to openly courting American Muslim voters. Such hollow politics hail from an earlier era, and may cost them dearly.

By NICK MARTIN September 4, 2019

Add to Pocket

Iama Alzubaidi, vice chair of the Muslim advocacy group Emgage Action Michigan, said that the inaction has come to symbolize what political leaders have noticed as a long trend of hollow offerings from a party that promises to support Muslims but then shrinks from the task when the opportunity arises.

HUFFPOST

Muslim Voter Turnout Is Way Up, New Report Finds

POLITICS 06/20/2019 09:00 am ET | Updated May 20, 2019

Muslim Voter Turnout Is Way Up, New Report Finds

Politicians should take note, argues the Muslim group Emgage.



By Daniel Marans

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Engage in the Media

POLITICO

2020 ELECTIONS

Muslim leaders: 2020 Democrats ignoring our community

By HOLLY OTTERBEIN | 08/30/2019 01:50 PM EDT

actions,” said Wa’el Alzayat, the CEO of Muslim advocacy group Engage and a former member of the Obama administration. “They have positioned themselves as the party that has opposed the Muslim ban, rampant Islamophobia, and the rhetoric and policies of the Trump administration.”

The convention, which is being held in Houston, Texas, is expected to draw 20,000 people. Trevor Noah, host of Comedy Central’s *The Daily Show*, will speak.

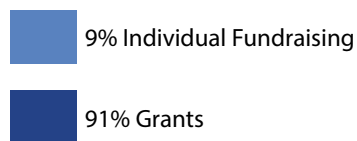
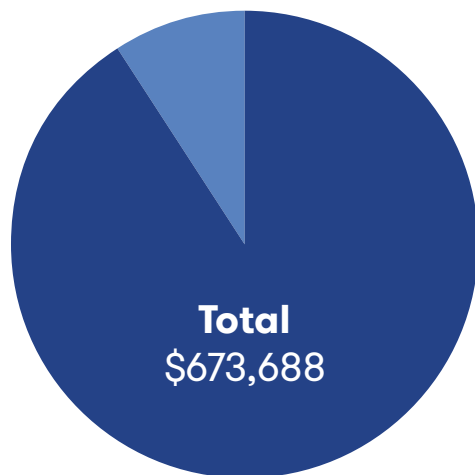
the guardian

Houston: Islamic group hosts Sanders and Castro as rightwingers protest

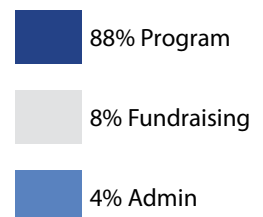
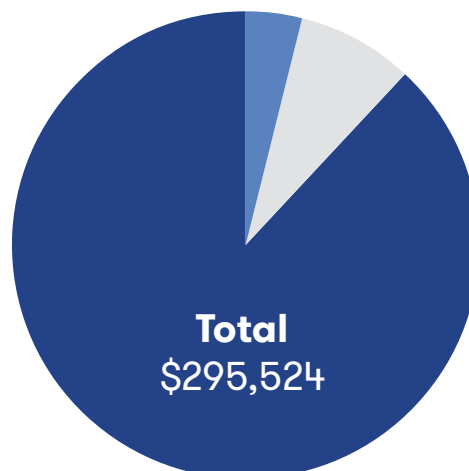
Counter-protesters outnumber small group of far-right demonstrators as 2020 contenders speak inside convention

C4 Financial Report

Income



Expenses





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Emgage Action



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