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June 23, 2021

Ms. Sunita Lough
Deputy Commissioner, Services and
Enforcement
Internal Revenue Service
1111 Constitution Ave NW
Washington, DC 20224

Mr. Robert Malone
Director, Exempt Organizations and Government Entities
Internal Revenue Service
1111 Constitution Ave NW
Washington, DC 20224

Re: New ADL Report –Extremist and Hate Groups May be Abusing Non-Profit Status

Dear Ms. Lough and Mr. Malone:

As you may know, ADL (the Anti-Defamation League) is a leading anti-hate organization with particular expertise in tracking and exposing extremist threats across the ideological spectrum.

In recent months, we have become increasingly concerned about the ways in which extremist and hateful groups operating as “charitable” non-profits may be abusing their tax-exempt status to further their violent or hateful objectives. Today, we released a new report on this topic, and a copy is enclosed for your review.

As you will see, after a cursory investigation, we uncovered evidence that a range of groups may be making misrepresentations in their tax filings in order to secure tax-exempt status in the first instance; engaging in self-dealing by paying their leaders excessive salaries; and/or diverting funds to enrich friends and family members at the expense of the tax-exempt entity itself.

In addition, hateful groups with tax-exempt status may be using that status to raise money for violent and/or illegal purposes. In the days leading up to the U.S. Capitol insurrection, for example, Oath Keepers’ founder Stewart Rhodes appeared on a podcast to solicit donations to the Oath Keepers Educational Foundation, a 501(c)(3) whose stated purpose on filings is to “give veterans an opportunity for continued involvement in community service.” Of course, this entity is not in the business of community service. The Oath Keepers is a heavily armed anti-government extremist group, actively recruiting members of law enforcement.

We urge the IRS to take swift and meaningful action to investigate organizations that may be abusing their tax-exempt status to support violent extremism, and to revoke this status where appropriate. We also call on the IRS to ensure proper oversight moving forward.

Please do not hesitate to be in touch if ADL can be of further assistance.

Sincerely,



Jonathan Greenblatt
CEO and National Director