

Terrorism Report Trump Touted 'Misleadingly Inflates' Muslim Threat to U.S., Lawsuit Alleges

Two watchdog groups have sued the Department of Justice and Department of Homeland Security over a report the agencies jointly issued earlier this year, stating that three of four people convicted of international terrorism and terrorism-related offenses were foreign-born. The report was trumpeted by President Donald Trump.

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Muslim Advocates and Democracy Forward filed the [lawsuit](#) on Monday after the departments failed to meet their demands to retract and correct information in the [report](#), which was disseminated in January.

“The report presents information on immigrants and foreign nationals in a manner that misleadingly inflates the threat they pose to the United States,” the lawsuit states. “Its presentation of this information also focuses exclusively and inaccurately on Muslims.”

According to a Department of Homeland Security analysis, about 73 percent of at least 549 individuals the report revealed were convicted of international terrorism-related charges in U.S. federal courts from September 11, 2001 through the end of 2016 were foreign-born.

The lawsuit claims the report “manipulates information to support its anti-immigrant and anti-Muslim conclusions” by, among other reasons, leaving out domestic terrorism incidents and including people who committed terrorist acts abroad and were only linked to the U.S. in their extradition.

Trump tweeted about the report the day it was released and said, “We have submitted to Congress a list of resources and reforms,” and, “[we need to keep America safe](#), including moving away from a random chain migration and lottery system, to one that is merit-based.”

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“Nothing will stop the administration and the president, the departments of homeland security and justice, from continuing to traffic in false and bigoted and stereotyped views of immigrants and Muslims,” Muslim Advocates legal director Johnathan Smith said in a press call Tuesday. “And that’s why we thought it was really important to file this action.”

The legal advocacy groups are seeking legal redress by invoking the little-known Information Quality Act, which requires federal agencies to meet a standard of accurate and unbiased information sent to the public. The report “lacks utility and objectivity,” Democracy Forward senior counsel Robin Thurston said during the press call.

A Department of Homeland Security spokesperson on Tuesday told *Newsweek* they do not comment on pending litigation. The Department of Justice did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Charles Kurzman, a sociology professor at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill specializing in Middle East and Islamic studies, raised concerns on the study’s methodology, similar to those in the new lawsuit, in a [blog post](#) published shortly after the report came out.

Kurzman filed a public records request in January seeking data on domestic terrorism cases. The Department of Homeland Security “has access to that data but chose not to use it in that report. It’s their data—they maintain that data,” Kurzman told *Newsweek*.

“Clearly, candidate Trump and President Trump is not overly sensitive to the feelings and experiences of Muslim Americans,” Kurzman added. “So this was just another slur on Muslim communities.”