

A Statement from CEP and Media Impact Funders

At CEP's biennial conference, CEP and Media Impact Funders typically work together to plan a documentary screening — often with a local angle related to the conference city — followed by a panel discussion. We look for documentaries that have been supported by institutional philanthropy and/or that raise issues and topics relevant to our conference audience of foundation leaders.

In the summer of 2018, we decided to screen *Time for Ilhan*, a documentary about now U.S. (then State) Representative Ilhan Omar (D-MN). The documentary highlights Representative Omar's successful bid for the Minnesota State House in 2016, which made her the first Somali-American elected to legislative office in the United States.

Since her subsequent election to the House of Representatives, Representative Omar has come under significant scrutiny and critique for comments that many — including the Anti-Defamation League and many of her congressional colleagues — consider anti-Semitic. Others, including several of Representative Omar's congressional colleagues, have defended her and her statements as reasonable critiques of Israel and U.S. policy toward Israel. Whatever her intent, there is no doubt that her comments have caused hurt to many Jewish-Americans. Representative Omar has herself also been singled out and subjected to racist and Islamophobic attacks.

CEP and Media Impact Funders hope that the program we have jointly planned can prompt healthy and respectful discussion, both about the groundbreaking nature of Representative Omar's election to state and federal office, as well as the concerns her comments have raised. The program will feature clips from *Time for Ilhan* followed by a panel discussion with the film's director and producer, Norah Shapiro, and Shawn Escoffery, executive director of the Roy and Patricia Disney Family Foundation. Vince Stehle, executive director of Media Impact Funders, will moderate the discussion.

Our organizations' shared objective is to foster healthy and respectful discussion and a spirit of inclusion. We condemn expressions of racist, anti-Semitic, and Islamophobic hate of any kind.