

August 6, 2019

The Honorable Cynthia Bauerly  
Commissioner  
Minnesota Department of Revenue  
600 North Robert Street  
St. Paul, MN 55101

Commissioner Bauerly,

I am writing to ask you to review the income tax filings of U.S. Representative Ilhan Omar (D-MN). Congresswoman Omar has made revisions to her income tax filings for 2014 and 2015. Specifically, these corrections were made because she illegally filed joint income tax returns with an individual that was not her legal spouse. Please consider examining this matter for a legal review.

Due to recent developments, I believe probable cause exists for an investigation into Rep. Omar's tax filings. Multiple instances of Rep. Omar's misuses of finances have been documented: false exemptions, kickbacks, and false deductions.

**False Exemptions:** On June 6, 2019, the Minnesota Campaign Finance Board (CFB) ordered Rep. Omar to repay \$1,500 which she illegally diverted from her campaign committee. These funds were used to pay a law firm to examine her joint income tax filings for 2014 and 2015 with Mr. Ahmed Hirsi [1]. However, public records show that Rep. Omar was legally married to a different individual, Mr. Ahmed Elmi, from 2009 to 2017 [2].

**Kickbacks:** On July 31, 2018, the Minneapolis Star Tribune reported that Rep. Omar agreed to return \$2,500 in honoraria she had taken in 2017 from several Minnesota community colleges [3]. She returned these payments because she oversaw their budgets as a member of the Higher Education Finance Committee of the Minnesota House of Representatives [4]. The question regarding how she treated these illegal payments on her 2017 tax return must be answered. Additionally, Rep. Omar may have fraudulently claimed tax credits for the refunds in subsequent years.

**False Deductions:** Mr. Ahmed Elmi, allegedly Rep. Omar's brother, entered the United States in January of 2009 and married Rep. Omar two weeks later [5]. At that time, and for the next two years, the couple shared addresses in Minnesota and North Dakota with Mr. Ahmed Hirsi. Rep. Omar would later marry Hirsi in 2017. Since Rep. Omar illegally filed joint income taxes with Mr. Hirsi in 2014 and 2015, then she may have engaged in additional financial wrongdoing. Examining the deductions in Rep. Omar's taxes from 2009-2017 may be instructive in locating fraudulent conduct.

Furthermore, recent judgments against Rep. Omar have raised questions about her claimed deductions, exemptions, and income. The Minnesota Campaign Finance Board (CFB) made three findings in June of this year regarding Rep. Omar's integrity when handling finances.

- **Travel:** The CFB ordered Rep. Omar to repay thousands of dollars she diverted from her campaign to pay for political trips to Boston, New York, Washington, Chicago, and Florida. These trips had nothing to do with her campaign or her elective service.
- **Personal Business:** The CFB ordered Rep. Omar to repay thousands of dollars she illegally diverted from her campaign. These funds were used for personal expenses relating to legal and accounting services.
- **Illegal Fund-Raising:** The CFB fined Rep. Omar \$500 for diverting campaign funds to pay for travel to Florida where she collected a check at a political event.

Other allegations which are not directly related to tax avoidance have been filed against Rep. Omar in recent months.

- **Perjury:** A complaint has been filed with the U.S. House Committee on Ethics which states that Rep. Omar made several false statements under the penalty of perjury in 2017. Court documents show that Rep. Omar claimed she had absolutely no contact with her first husband, Ahmed Elmi, since 2011. However, Elmi was photographed in the delivery room when Rep. Omar's third child was born in 2012. Both individuals have also interacted multiple times on social media since 2011.
- **Bigamy:** A complaint has been filed with the U.S. House Committee on Ethics which states that Rep. Omar entered into a contract to marry Mr. Hirsi while she was still married to Mr. Elmi. This is in violation of the law.
- **Immigration Fraud:** A complaint has been filed with the U.S. House Committee on Ethics which states that Rep. Omar filed immigration papers with Mr. Elmi relating to their 2009 marriage. Mr. Elmi entered the country in January of 2009 and married Rep. Omar two weeks later.
- **Student Aid Fraud:** In order to qualify for more student aid, grants, and assistance, Rep. Omar entered a sham marriage with her brother, Mr. Elmi. Entering a sham marriage would allow both individuals to exclude their parents' assets in their financial disclosures when requesting student aid. Such deception would result in Rep. Omar and Mr. Elmi receiving undue financial aid.

Given Rep. Omar's apparent disrespect for laws pertaining to campaign contributions, public integrity, and immigration, the Minnesota Department of Revenue should conduct a detailed reexamination of Rep. Omar's tax filings. In the United States of America, no one is above the law. Rep. Omar must live by those rules just as we all do.

I hope you will direct a thorough review of Rep. Omar's tax filings in light of these recent developments.

Sincerely,

Rep. Steve Drazkowski, District 21B  
Minnesota House of Representatives

Rep. Linda Runbeck, District 38A  
Minnesota House of Representatives

Rep. Glenn Gruenhagen, District 18B  
Minnesota House of Representatives

Rep. Shane Mekeland, 15B  
Minnesota House of Representatives

Rep. John Poston, District 9A  
Minnesota House of Representatives

Rep. Eric Lucero, District 30B  
Minnesota House of Representatives

Rep. Duane Quam, District 25A  
Minnesota House of Representatives

Rep. Tim Miller, District 17A  
Minnesota House of Representatives

Rep. Cal Bahr, District 31B  
Minnesota House of Representatives

Rep. Jeremy Munson, District 23B  
Minnesota House of Representatives

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup>Campaign Finance and Public Disclosure Board, “Findings, Conclusions, and Order in the Matter of the Complaint of Steve Drazkowski Regarding the Neighbors for Ilhan (Omar) Committee,” State of Minnesota. 6 June 2019.

<sup>2</sup>Hennepin County District Court, “Application for an Order for Service by Alternate Means: 27-FA-17-3331,” Minnesota Fourth Judicial District. 2 August 2017.

<sup>3</sup>Omar, Ilhan House Committee – 17886, “2017 Annual Statement of Economic Interest,” Minnesota Campaign finance and Public Disclosure Board. 20 June 2018.

<sup>4</sup>Star Tribune Editorial Board, “Ilhan Omar’s Credibility Takes another Hit,” Star Tribune Media Company, LLC. 11 June 2019.

<sup>5</sup>Hennepin County District Court, “Marriage License Application,” State of Minnesota. 12 February 2009.