

Background and Legislative Update

The End Racial Profiling Act (S.1056/H.R.1933), introduced by Senator Ben Cardin (D-MD) and Representative John Conyers (D-MI), seeks to address the injustice of racial profiling. Defined in the bill as “the practice of a law enforcement agent or agency relying, to any degree, on race, ethnicity, religion, national origin, gender, sexual orientation or gender identity in selecting which individuals to subject to routine or spontaneous investigatory activities, or in deciding upon the scope and substance of law enforcement activity following the initial investigatory procedure,” racial profiling denies individuals the constitutional right of equal protection under the law. Racial profiling raises civil rights concerns, undermines the criminal justice system by diverting resources from pursuing actual criminal behavior, and reinforces false stereotypes, whether in the context of counterterrorism, street-level crime or immigration enforcement.

The End Racial Profiling Act (S.1056/H.R.1933) would:

- Prohibit federal, state, and local law enforcement from targeting a person based on actual or perceived race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, gender, gender identity, or sexual orientation without trustworthy information that is relevant to linking a person to a crime
- Requires federal law enforcement to maintain adequate policies and procedures designed to eliminate racial profiling, including data collecting and processes for investigating and responding to complaints alleging racial profiling
- Ensure specialized instruction in federal law enforcement training
- Condition state and local governments’ receipt of federal funds on the successful adoption of anti-racial profiling policies
- Award Justice Department grants to state and local governments that best implement practices that defeat racial profiling
- Position the U.S. Attorney General as watchdog to assess such practices

Reform Jewish Values

Over the decades, the Union for Reform Judaism and the Central Conference of American Rabbis have adopted numerous resolutions in support of civil rights. The URJ most recently adopted a resolution entitled, “[Resolution on the Crisis of Racial and Structural Inequality in the United States](#).” And, in June 2015, the CCAR adopted a “[Resolution on Racial Justice](#).” The resolution states in part, “The CCAR has long recognized that racism and economic injustice perpetuate disparities in American life, and are injustices in themselves, contributing to an unjust criminal justice system. On topics ranging from economic justice to voting rights, from disparities in educational opportunity to formal and informal residential segregation, we have lifted up the prophetic voice in our resolutions, calling for *tikkun olam*, for a repair of our too-often broken American society.”

Judaism teaches respect for the fundamental rights of others as each person's duty to God. "What is hateful to you, do not do to your neighbor" (Babylonian Talmud, Shabbat 31a). Equality in the Jewish tradition is based on the concept that all of God's children are "created in the image of God" (Genesis 1:27).

The Torah teaches us to accept others without prejudice or bias: "You shall not hate your kinsfolk in your heart. Reprove your kinsman, but incur no guilt because of him. You shall not take vengeance or bear a grudge against your countrymen. Love your fellow as yourself: I am the Eternal" (Leviticus 19: 17-18).

The Talmud teaches that all people are descendants of a single person so that no person can say, "my ancestor is greater than yours." God created humanity from the four corners of the earth - yellow clay, white sand, black loam and red soil. Therefore, the earth can declare to no part of humanity that it does not belong here, that this soil is not their rightful home.