Treasury Department Affirms Title VI Protections Against Ancestry and Ethnicity Discrimination

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As part of Biden-Harris Administration’s National Strategy to Counter Antisemitism, Treasury Department Joins Agencies from across the Administration in Affirming Title VI Enforcement Against Antisemitic, Islamophobic, and other Discrimination

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Department of the Treasury (Treasury Department) today joined seven other federal agencies in clarifying for the first time that Title VI of the Civil Rights Act, which protects individuals from discrimination based on actual or perceived shared ancestry or ethnic characteristics, offers protection against certain forms of antisemitic, Islamophobic, and related discrimination and bias. The fact sheet released today describes ways this protection may cover individuals who are or are perceived to be Jewish, Christian, Muslim, Sikh, Hindu, Buddhist, or of another religious group. Today’s announcement is a key step to implement the Biden-Harris Administration’s National Strategy to Counter Antisemitism, released in May 2023.

“The Treasury Department provides critical services and financial assistance that touch the lives of millions of American families, workers, and businesses,” said Deputy Secretary of the Treasury Wally Adeyemo. “In providing this assistance, Treasury maintains a clear prohibition against discrimination in all of our policies, programs, and operations.”

The Treasury Department’s Office of Civil Rights and Equal Employment Opportunity (OCRE) enforces Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibits discrimination based on race, color, and national origin (including shared ancestry and ethnic characteristics) by recipients of Federal financial assistance from the Department. Further, the Department has an established process for the beneficiaries of Treasury financial assistance to file complaints of discrimination with OCRE.

The Treasury Department continues to implement its commitments made under the National Strategy to Counter Antisemitism. For instance, the Treasury Department is promoting information to assist financial institutions to identify financial transactions of violent extremists, including those motivated to violence by antisemitism. This includes the
Department’s recently launched Domestic Violent Extremism Landing Page, which provides information to help financial institutions better address how violent extremists raise, move, and use funds to facilitate violent acts against Jews and others.

Today’s fact sheet “Protecting Individuals from Discrimination Based on an Actual or Perceived Shared Ancestry or Ethnic Characteristics” and additional resources are available here.

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