

ALERT

Lawmakers Urge DOJ to Investigate Foreign Influence on U.S. College Campuses

October 14, 2024

On July 9, U.S. Senator Chuck Grassley sent a letter to the Department of Justice (DOJ) and the FBI expressing concerns over U.S. college campus organizations with alleged ties to Hamas that may be avoiding registration under the Foreign Agents Registration Act (FARA).

Specifically, the letter calls into question the National Students for Justice for Palestine (NSJP), a national organization that supports local chapters of the Students for Justice in Palestine (SJP) across various U.S. college campuses. The letter states that according to public reporting and lawsuits, these two groups “have taken actions to shape U.S. policy and public opinion in favor of Hamas.” It is believed that NSJP supports over 350 SJP chapters across the U.S. and has provided SJP chapters with toolkits for resistance, a newsletter, and petitions in support of their mission which “promotes the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) against Israel movement by specifically highlighting universities’ divestment from Israel.”

The letter further describes potential links between NSJP and Hamas through NSJP’s alleged connections to the American Muslims for Palestine, an organization founded in 2001 by individuals who had previously been implicated by the U.S. government for financing Hamas. As such, the lawmakers call into question whether NSJP would be considered a “publicity agent” under FARA for its ties to a foreign agent (Hamas) and its efforts to shape U.S. public opinion.

The letter asks what efforts, if any, the DOJ has taken to assess the potential FARA registration requirements for NSJP, SJP, or any associated individuals. The letter requires DOJ to respond by October 22, 2024. Sen. Grassley is joined in support by Sens. Joni Ernst (R-IA),

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Practice Areas

Foreign Agents Registration Act (FARA)
National Security

Ted Cruz (R-TX), and Tim Scott (R-SC).

Notably, Sen. Grassley has been at the forefront of congressional efforts to strengthen the administration and enforcement FARA in recent years, including proposals to reform both the Trade/Commerce and Lobbying Disclosure Act exemptions to FARA registration. This most recent congressional letter to the DOJ closely follows other recent requests urging the DOJ to investigate potential unregistered foreign agent relationships, including those involving entities linked to Qatar and the Chinese Communist Party.

Please contact the attorney listed on this alert with any questions.

View Wiley's FARA Handbook [here](#)

Maddie Van Aken, a Legislative and Reporting Coordinator at Wiley Rein LLP, contributed to this alert.