



United States Department of State

Washington, D.C. 20520

JAN 2 2008

Dear Senator Kyl:

Thank you for your letter of November 15 regarding the issue of textbooks and the Islamic Saudi Academy (ISA).

We strongly believe that no government should be producing materials that are intolerant of other religious, racial, or ethnic groups, or teaching such intolerance as part of its educational curriculum. For this reason, we have been engaged over the last few years in a vigorous dialogue with the Saudi Government. In July of 2006, the Saudi Government confirmed to us its policy to undertake a program of textbook reform to eliminate all passages that disparage or promote hatred toward any religion or religious groups. This process is scheduled to be completed in time for the start of the 2008 school year. While we have noted reasonable progress to date, we will continue to monitor the progress of Saudi revisions, and consider it premature to judge the overall success or failure of the Saudi Government's efforts at this time.

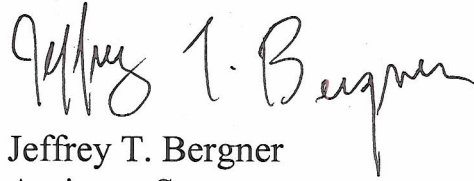
With respect to the ISA, the Department of State has urged the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF), the ISA, and the Saudi Embassy to work together to ensure that USCIRF receives copies of the books being used at the ISA. In this context, we understand that ISA has offered to make textbooks available to USCIRF. Also, according to media reports, a Fairfax County Supervisor has sought and been granted access to the ISA's textbooks. Additionally, the ISA recently hosted a group of local journalists who were also given the opportunity to visit the school and conduct an initial review of the school's materials.

The Foreign Missions Act provides the Department broad authority to regulate foreign missions in the United States in order to facilitate relations, to protect the interests of the United States, and for other specified purposes. The Department has not determined that action against the ISA under the FMA is appropriate, but will continue to carefully monitor the situation.

The Honorable
John Kyl,
United States Senate.

We hope this information is helpful. Please feel free to contact us further on this or any other matter of concern to you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jeffrey T. Bergner". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Jeffrey" and last name "Bergner" clearly distinguishable.

Jeffrey T. Bergner
Assistant Secretary
Legislative Affairs