

**From:** J.Martin

**Sent:** Thursday, April 05, 2018 11:40 AM

**To:** dtmack@treasury.state.la.us; Jasmine Tricou <JTricou@treasury.state.la.us>; 'rhenson@treasury.state.la.us' <rhenson@treasury.state.la.us>

**Subject:** Gulen Network of Schools - Phone Meeting of 4/5/18

Dear Treasurer Schroder,

It was a pleasure to meet you this morning on the phone. Your passion about charter schools – *good* charter schools – was clear to me from the very beginning of our conversation. Thank you for taking the time to speak with me this morning about the critical issues surrounding the Gulen schools.

As you requested, I am providing your staff and you with some written materials regarding the Gulen schools to review. This is the link to our investigation website, which details the misconduct and questionable practices of these schools nationwide: [www.empireofdeceit.com](http://www.empireofdeceit.com). On the website, you will find an interactive map to the regions of the country where these schools are active, including Louisiana, and other sources of information about the obvious misconduct and suspect dealings regarding these schools. The comprehensive Louisiana article from the website also can be found here: <http://empireofdeceit.com/pdf/Louisiana%20State%20Profile.pdf>. I also am attaching the NAACP Resolution for your review, as we discussed.

More recent information regarding the Gulen school in Louisiana includes the following:

#### Overview

Kenilworth Science and Technology Charter School, in Baton Rouge, currently operates in Louisiana. With attendance of 561 students and total revenues of more than \$6.6 million, for the past three years Kenilworth has received a “D” rating from the Louisiana Department of Education. This score is 18 points below the state average on state tests in 2015- 2016 (15% vs. 33%).

Kenilworth and Pelican have targeted mostly minority and economically-disadvantaged students. Traditional Louisiana public schools are 49.8% white, 3.7% Hispanic, and 43.2% black. Louisiana charter schools are 12% white, 3% Hispanic and 81.8% black. Louisiana Gulen schools are 3% white, 11% Hispanic, and 85% black. 66.2% of Louisiana students are eligible for free reduced lunches, while Louisiana Gulen schools have 94% of students on the free reduced lunch program. The NAACP Resolution, attached above, speaks to the concerns of this community.

Charter Vendor and Educational Management Services

Kenilworth contracts with Pelican Educational Foundation for educational management services. Its charter vendor is Harmony Public Schools, of Houston, Texas. Both Pelican and Harmony have a litany of poor financial practices and controls, H1-B visa misuse, discrimination, self-dealing, and other highly suspect conduct. Pelican's superintendent, past CEOs and key employees previously worked for Harmony, which renders suspect any supposed "arms-length" agreement between the entities. Pelican is considered "not a low risk auditee" regarding its use of federal funds.

Pelican and Harmony contracted to provide range of administrative and academic services in the form of a long term, annually renewed services agreement (5% of state or federal funds annually). Also, Pelican was chosen as Kenilworth's educational services provider without any apparent competitive bidding process. Harmony also charges licensing fee for IP software between \$15,000-\$147,000 per school year. Because such funds are not direct state funds given to Harmony, they are not considered public funds and therefore are a good source of unregulated state/ federal income for Harmony.

Suspect Importation of Teachers and Employees from Turkey

Between 2001-2016 Pelican, Abramson (now closed high school in New Orleans) and Kenilworth filed for 125 H-1B visas, which is an exceptionally high number of visas for only two schools. The total cost for these applications and related work was \$321,000. Pelican and Kenilworth have applied for an additional seven visas in 2017. Regardless of the apparent abuse of the visa process, such applications are costing Louisiana taxpayers unnecessary funds every year.

Further, the quality of the teachers recruited from Turkey by Kenilworth and Pelican is poor. Most have difficulty communicating in English. On the whole, including the rest of the teaching staff, four of whom have certifications that expired prior to October 1, 2016, and five of whom have experience that cannot be verified. Historically, in 2010, 36% of Kenilworth teachers were uncertified (59% the year prior), as opposed to 4-5% state average. And two employment lawsuits were brought in 2010-11 by teachers claiming wrongful termination due to discrimination. We have no reason to believe these trends have been addressed or corrected.

Thank you for your thoughtful attention to this matter.

Best regards,

John Martin

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## CA HI NAACP STATE CONVENTION

Los Angeles Airport Marriott Hotel  
OCTOBER 29, 2017 - RESOLUTIONS

### RESOLUTION CONCERNING THE IMPACT OF GÜLEN CHARTER SCHOOLS

**WHEREAS**, there exists over 200 schools in the United States operated by the Gülen Organization, teaching over 80,000 American students. This organization operates under the names Magnolia Science Academy (CA), Horizon Science Academy (OH, IL), Harmony Science Academy (TX), Sonoran Science Academy (AR), Coral Academy of Science (NV), Dove Science Academy (OK), as well as others.

**WHEREAS**, audits having been conducted in LAUSD, the State of Oklahoma, the State of Georgia (resulting in their closure), the State of New York, have resulted in a pattern of massive accounting irregularities involving without limitation the use of Gülen related landlords such as Terra (NY, NJ), the Sky Foundation (OK), Harmony Public Schools (TX), Concept Schools (IL, OH), the use of Gülen Related Management Companies such as Accord (CA), Concept Education Services (OH), Apple Education (NJ), Terra Science and Education (NY), as well as others.

**WHEREAS**, Gülen schools; such as Magnolia (CA) have targeted the African American and Hispanic communities as shown in the documentary film Killing Ed.

**WHEREAS**, all 200 Gülen schools recruit teachers from Turkey under the H-1B Visa program thereby replacing fully qualified American teachers.

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, the California NAACP urges federal, state and local authorities to conduct forensic audits of both the schools, and the management organizations operating them.

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED**, that the California NAACP further urges that these investigations be conducted by state and federal auditors as opposed to state boards of education, as well as other relevant investigations necessary to evaluate fully the apparent, suspect financial dealings, visa misuse, and highly suspicious conduct.

Signed by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Alice A. Huffman".

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Alice A. Huffman, President