

November 21, 2017

WSYX
1261 Dublin Rd
Columbus, OH 43215-7000

To whom it may concern,

I am writing regarding a segment you recently aired about the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) called “Behind the Headlines with Mark Hyman.” The segment was inaccurate, defamatory, and irresponsible. Picking up on a bogus report from a publication called the Washington Free Beacon, Mr. Hyman said that we spent just \$62,000 on legal expenses in 2015, implying that figure was related to the legal services provided by the “more than 100 lawyers and advocates engaged in public interest litigation” at the SPLC. That figure represents the amount that the SPLC spent on its own corporate legal services, not the amount it spent providing legal services for others. The SPLC spent more than \$1.8 million on out-of-pocket case costs for litigation brought on behalf of its clients—not including salary and other necessary overhead costs. In fact, our publicly available audited financial statements show that during that same fiscal year the SPLC spent more than \$15 million on legal initiatives on behalf of its clients.

The same segment also incorrectly stated that a “young woman who called into a radio show to discuss socialism is on the [hate group] list.” Mr. Hyman must have known this statement was false, or evidenced a reckless disregard for the truth, since he was referring to the SPLC’s hate groups map, which lists only groups (as the name implies) and not individuals. Finally, Mr. Hyman incorrectly stated that Maajid Nawaz and Liberty Counsel were suing the SPLC for defamation. No lawsuits have been filed against the SPLC by Mr. Nawaz or Liberty Counsel, something that simple fact-checking would have revealed.

We expect your station to acknowledge on the air the errors contained in the story about the SPLC, remove any reference to the story from your website if it was posted there, and not run the segment again. Please contact me at 334-309-6771 or via email at jim.knoepp@splcenter.org with any questions. Thank you in advance for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



James M. Knoepp
General Counsel