



Statement from the National Association for Public Defense on the Federal Indictment of the Southern Poverty Law Center

4/23/2026 - The National Association for Public Defense (NAPD) is deeply concerned about the announcement of a federal indictment of the Southern Poverty Law Center by the Department of Justice.

The SPLC has denied the allegations and has pledged to vigorously defend itself, its staff, and its work. We support their right to do so and to receive the full measure of due process that the Constitution guarantees every accused.

As public defenders, we view this indictment with grave concern. It arrives against a backdrop that cannot be ignored: the current administration has openly identified the SPLC as an adversary and senior officials have repeatedly signaled hostility toward its civil rights work. When the machinery of federal prosecution is turned on an organization whose mission is to document extremism and defend the marginalized, every American who cares about the rule of law should take notice.

For more than fifty years, the SPLC has been a beacon for justice — litigating against the Klan, exposing hate-driven violence, and standing up for the incarcerated, the poor, and the vulnerable. Its work has directly benefited the indigent clients our members represent every day. That legacy cannot be erased by an indictment.

We recognize that an indictment is an accusation, not a finding. We trust the SPLC to meet these charges in court. And we call on the Department of Justice to ensure that this prosecution is conducted free of political influence, with the transparency and fairness that the public is entitled to demand.

NAPD stands with those who serve our communities and against those who impugn or attack our rights.

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