

SECURE AMERICA NOW

IMPACT: Secure America Now is a privately funded non-profit organization that employs fear-mongering ads to advocate policies which include dismantling the Iran nuclear deal, and designating the Muslim Brotherhood a terrorist organization. Its funders include billionaire Trump donor Robert Mercer, and the president of the World Jewish Congress, Ronald S. Lauder.

- Founded in 2010 as a non-partisan 501(c)4 nonprofit organization, Secure America Now describes itself as “the largest national security digital platform in the nation,” **dedicated to “policies that will protect our nation against terrorist infiltration, attack and capitulation to our enemies.”** The US-based organization states it was **originally founded by a “small group of political professionals,”** who “**volunteered to fight this bad idea.**” The “**bad idea**” was the **construction of a Muslim community center in New York City** erroneously dubbed the “Ground Zero mosque.”
- In 2018 *The Daily Beast* reported that the organization is **largely funded by hedge-fund billionaire and major Trump donor, Robert Mercer, the 45Committee (a pro-Trump dark money group), and Ronald S. Lauder,** the president of the World Jewish Congress. Allen Roth, an adviser to Lauder, is the group’s president. In 2016, **Mercer and the 45Committee each gave \$2 million while Lauder donated \$1.1million.** Secure America Now’s 2016 tax returns also stated that Bradbury Anderson, former CEO of Best Buy, gave \$25,000 to the organization. In 2011, investigative journalist Eli Clifton revealed that GOP pollster John McLaughlin and fellow pollster and former advisor to President Jimmy Carter Pat Caddell were involved in the founding of Secure America Now.
- A 2014 article by Clifton in *Salon* stated that Secure America Now was **listed in 2010 as a “related tax-exempt organization” to One Jerusalem (also known as Americans for Jerusalem),** an advocacy organization dedicated to “maintaining a united Jerusalem as the undivided capital of Israel.” According to the 2010 filing, One Jerusalem is the “direct controlling entity” of Secure America Now. At the time, Allen Roth served as President of both organizations. Clifton reported that **One Jerusalem’s biggest funder was the right-wing pro-Likud billionaire casino mogul Sheldon Adelson,** who “donated nearly \$83 million to Republicans in the 2016 election.”
- A 2015 article in *The Hill* revealed that current **National Security Advisor John Bolton and former Governor of Arkansas Mike Huckabee both sit on the board** of Secure America Now.
- In its 2016 tax returns, Secure America Now claims it is **engaged in “education, advocacy, and political activities,”** with a “**particular focus on the dangers posed to America by the development of nuclear weapons by Iran and Radical Islam.**”
- The group calls on readers to sign letters and submit signatures in support of various issues. Some of the organization's advocacy efforts include seeking to dismantle the Iran Nuclear deal, lobbying to designate the Muslim Brotherhood as a terrorist organization, **supporting the Trump administration’s Muslim Ban, and stopping “Radical Islamic Terrorism.”**
- In 2012, *Politico* reported the group ran ads in Florida featuring Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu warning viewers about the threat of Iran’s nuclear program. **Another 2012 ad by the group specifically listed then-President Barack Obama’s efforts to close blacksite prisons and stop “enhanced interrogation,” a euphemism for torture, as reasons that America was unsafe under Obama’s leadership.** The Center for Public Integrity, a non-profit, non-partisan

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investigative journalism organization, described the ad as **"fear-mongering" and "rife with false and misleading statements."**

- In 2014, Secure America Now released an ad against Senator Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH), stating: "While radical Islamists threaten to attack America and millions cross our border undetected, President Obama and Senator Shaheen have done nothing." The **16-second ad featured an image of journalist James Foley moments before he was beheaded by ISIS militants in 2014**. In response, **Foley's father called the ad "deplorable" and asked for an apology. Foley's mother said, "It makes me very sad that people would use the brutality of our son's death for their own political purposes."** In response, the group's president apologized to the family and pulled the video.
- In 2016, Secure America Now **worked with Facebook and Google to place anti-Muslim and anti-refugee ads in key swing states during the presidential election**. *Bloomberg News* reported the ads included **"fake tourism videos showing France and Germany under Sharia law** and ads linking Democratic Senate candidates like Catherine Cortez Masto with terrorists." In one ad, **"the Statue of Liberty wears a burka and the Hollywood sign is changed to 'Allahu Akbar.'"**
- Following the 2018 investigation by Open Secrets, a research group that tracks the effects of money and lobbying on elections and public policy, which revealed the funders behind Secure America Now, **Lauder issued a statement disavowing the group's anti-Muslim videos and stated he contributed to Secure America Now because the group opposed the Iran nuclear deal**.
- A 2018 article in *The Daily Beast* revealed that **Secure America Now tried to "get audio recorded claiming erroneously that Rep. Beto O'Rourke's (D-TX) Senate campaign was endorsed by Iranian President Hassan Rouhani."**
- The group is listed as a **client of Harris Media**, a Texas-based ad company. Harris Media stated it worked with the organization "to fight the Nuclear Iran Deal," and that Secure America Now was the first advocacy group to use social media tactics that included placing "the first paid political Snapchat filter, the first Google click-to-call advocacy campaign, and the first native Twitter video attack ad," to influence policy. **Harris Media counts the German far-right party, Alternative for Germany (AFD) among its clients**. Past clients include Senator Ted Cruz (R-TX), former Alaska Governor Sarah Palin, and the populist British UKIP party.
- A 2018 report by the *New York Times* revealed that a **top Trump fundraiser and political adviser to leaders in the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia, Elliott Broidy, described Secure America Now as "one of the groups I am working with' to push** the Trump administration to fill key positions with individuals favorable to those Persian Gulf leaders."