SCOTT GARRETT
5TH DISTRICT, NEW JERSEY

FINANCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE
CHAIRMAN
CAPITAL MARKETS AND
GOVERNMENT SPONSORED ENTERPRISES
SUBCOMMITTEE

BUDGET COMMITTEE

CONSTITUTION CAUCUS
CHAIRMAN

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515–3005

2232 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515
(202) 225-4465

266 HARRISTOWN ROAD
GLEN ROCK, NJ 07452
(201) 444-5454

83 SPRING STREET
NEWTON, NJ 07860
(973) 300-2000

www.house.gov/Garrett

March 7, 2013

The Honorable John Kerry
Secretary of State
United States Department of State
2201 C Street N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Secretary Kerry:

It has recently come to my attention that you and the First Lady Michelle Obama will be presenting the Secretary of State's International Women of Courage Award on Friday, March 8, 2013, to honor women who work for democracy and human rights in nations where women often face difficulty and oppression.

The presentation of the award to Samira Ibrahim, however, raises potentially troubling questions. As reported by the Weekly Standard, an individual utilizing a Twitter account under the handle "@samiraibrahim4" sent a series of anti-American, anti-Semitic tweets between July 18, 2012, and September 11, 2012. As you are aware, on July 18, 2012, a bus carrying five Israeli tourists in Burgas, Bulgaria was destroyed by a bomb, killing the tourists and their Bulgarian driver. This attack was later linked to Hezbollah. The individual using @samiraibrahim4 wrote that, because of the explosion, "Today is a very sweet day with a lot of very sweet news."

On August 4, 2012—commenting on protests in Saudi Arabia against the ruling House of Saud—@samiraibrahim4 remarked that the ruling Al Saud family was "dirtier than the Jews." Seventeen days later, a tweet quoted Adolf Hitler, stating that "no act contrary to morality, no crime against society, takes place, except with the Jews having a hand in it."

In fact, the individual tweeting at @samiraibrahim4 does not limit vitriol just to the Jewish people. On September 11, 2012, Egyptian protestors attacked the American Embassy in Cairo. Overjoyed at the sight of the protestors tearing down the American flag and raising a jihadist banner, @samiraibrahim4 wrote, "Today is the anniversary of 9/11. May every year come with America burning."

These comments about Jews and celebrating the 9/11 attacks are quite disconcerting and raise a number of questions. In light of these questions, can you please provide me with the answers to the following questions. What is the State Department's procedure for selecting and vetting candidates for the International Women of Courage Award? Did the State Department review Ms. Ibrahim's Twitter account prior to selecting her for this award? If Ms. Ibrahim is the

author of the offensive tweets, what steps will the State Department take to denounce these hateful messages? Furthermore, if Ms. Ibrahim is the author of these tweets, what protocol will be followed to ensure future award recipients are better vetted?

I would appreciate a response at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely,

Scott Garrett

SCOTT GARRETT
Member of Congress