



Paul Noursi – Co-chair
Nancy Wein – Co-chair

Participating Organizations

American Muslims for Palestine

Appalachian Peace Education Center

Arab American Association of Central Virginia

Community for Justice in Palestine & Israel of the Alliance of Baptists

Defenders for Freedom, Justice, and Equality

Israel Palestine Mission Network of the Presbyterian Church - USA

Jewish Voice for Peace

National Arab American Women's Association

New Dominion PAC

Northern Virginians for Peace & Justice

Palestinian Christian Alliance for Peace

Plowshares Peace & Justice Center

Richmonders for Peace in Israel and Palestine

Unitarian Universalists for Justice in the Middle East, Northern Virginia Chapter

United Methodists for Kairos Response

US Campaign for Palestinian Rights

Washington Interfaith Alliance for Middle East Peace

January 25, 2019

Dr. Nana Banerjee
President and CEO
McGraw-Hill Education

Dear Dr. Banerjee,

We are co-chairs of the Education Committee of the Virginia Coalition for Human Rights, and we write to thank you for your letter of June 28, 2018 and for sharing our concerns about inaccuracies in ***Geography: The Human and Physical World*** with your education team. We have heard from Ms. Shelly Becker of that team, and she has reassured us that McGraw-Hill has an established process for reviewing and responding to issues raised.

In general, we have found the text related to Israel and Palestine to be overly simplistic and out-of-date, which leads to inaccuracies. We are concerned by the one-sided, largely pro-Israel account of the conflict; the absence of discussion of indirect cause-and-effect relationships; the homogenization of the variety of perspectives that exist on this issue; the usage of subjective versus descriptive text; and the reinforcement of stereotypes of Arab women and traditional Islamic practices.

We have attached a review by Virginia academicians—many of whom are Middle East experts—of the problematic sections of the text. Our concerns are in Unit 5: North Africa, Southwest Asia, and Central Asia, Chapters 15-18. For each problematic statement, we have noted the passage and have provided possible rewording of that passage, with our rationales and multiple citations.

We have also attached a summary of the rating sheet for this text completed by a Virginia Department of Education textbook review committee in December of 2017, which includes our comments. We focus on Section I: WG1.d; WG1.f; WG2.b; and WG18.a—in addition to items in #7 in Section II.

We thank you in advance for your response to this letter. We sincerely hope that you will carefully consider our concerns. We believe it is important for textbook companies to consult a wide variety of expert views when writing a textbook to be used by young people. It is important that Virginia's teachers and students have balanced, accurate materials in their classrooms.

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Co-chair, Education Committee

Jeanne Trabulsi
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