



GOVERNOR GREG ABBOTT

August 21, 2026

The Honorable Todd Blanche
Attorney General
U.S. Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20530

The Honorable Harmeet Dhillon
Assistant Attorney General, Civil Rights Division
U.S. Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20530

Dear Attorney General Blanche and Assistant Attorney General Dhillon:

As you may be aware, I recently referred a matter involving the Dallas-Fort Worth International Airport (DFW) and the George Bush Intercontinental Airport (IAH) to U.S. Department of Transportation Secretary Sean Duffy for investigation.¹ After my letter, DFW abandoned its plans to install ablution facilities for Islamic wudu washing rituals onsite, but it has since been discovered that two such stations are already in operation at the airport.² Separately, IAH has already installed one such facility and an interconnecting prayer room furnished with “copies of the Quran, prayer rugs, prayer beads and a turbah.”³

As I noted to Secretary Duffy, both airports are *government-owned* facilities.⁴ Public statements concerning both DFW and IAH have already admitted that these discriminatory facilities are

¹ Press Release, Office of the Texas Governor, *Governor Abbott Directs Review of Airports Over Illegal Religious Discrimination* (Aug. 14, 2026), <https://gov.texas.gov/news/post/governor-abbott-directs-review-of-airports-over-illegal-religious-discrimination>.

² See Carter Freeman, *DFW Airport Abandons Plan to Add More Islamic Foot-Washing Stations After Abbott Threat*, FOX 4 KDFW (Aug. 14, 2026), <https://www.fox4news.com/news/dfw-airport-abandons-plan-add-more-islamic-foot-washing-stations-after-abbott-threat>.

³ Houston Airports, Press Release, *Houston Airports Refines International Passenger Experience with New Ritual Washing and Prayer Spaces at Bush Airport* (Feb. 21, 2024), <https://perma.cc/DDN5-78FF>.

⁴ City of Houston, *Departments and Directors*, <https://www.houstontx.gov/departments.html> (detailing structure of the Houston Airport System); DFW Airport, *Procurement*, <https://www.dfwairport.com/business/opportunities/procurement/> (describing DFW as a “Public Entity” that is “owned by the Cities of Dallas and Fort Worth, Texas”); see also TEX. CONST. art. IX, § 12; TEX. TRANSP. CODE ch. 22.

funded by the airports.⁵ Yet, these stations are designed to single out one subset of the population for special treatment based on religion. They are not comparable to any existing “interfaith chapels,” which are open and available to all, because (in these particular instances) they are clearly purposed to benefit the Muslim population alone.⁶ I am unaware of either airport installing standalone facilities to meet the particular needs of the many other religious groups represented across Texas, much less the strategic display of any signs intended to cater to such particularized religions.

It goes without saying: The U.S. Constitution prohibits the government from facilitating this sort of discrimination.⁷ The federal government exercises primary authority over security and access within airport terminals, including the authority to inspect and regulate terminal facilities.⁸ And because the airports receive federal funds, they are subject to numerous conditions attached to that funding—including the requirement to comply with all applicable laws prohibiting discrimination and protecting the rights of all Americans.⁹ That is why I referred this matter to Secretary Duffy. Separately, I am also reviewing this matter under state law.

To put it simply, it is clear that these government-owned airports have used—and continue to use—funds charged to the public to finance, maintain, advertise, and operate Muslim-only spaces on property that should be open and accessible to all citizens. Airports can no more offer Muslim-only bathroom spaces than they can maintain white-only bathrooms. Your office has authority to investigate and put a stop to these discriminatory practices.¹⁰

To that end, I am referring this matter to you and request that the U.S. Department of Justice immediately review these discriminatory facilities at DFW and IAH and take appropriate corrective action.

⁵ See Dylan Duke, *DFW Airport Says Islamic Foot-Washing Station Proposal Contains Mistakes, Isn't Approved Yet*, KERA NEWS (Aug. 14, 2026), <https://www.keranews.org/news/2026-08-14/dfw-airport-clarifies-islamic-feet-washing-stations-not-approved-yet-not-privately-funded>; Shafaq Patel, *Whitmire Counters Abbott's Airport Funding Threat*, AXIOS HOUSTON (Aug. 17, 2026), <https://www.axios.com/local/houston/2026/08/17/whitmire-abbott-iah-ablution-room-houston-airport>.

⁶ See Benny Johnson (@bennyjohnson), X (Aug. 20, 2026, 2:08 PM), <https://x.com/bennyjohnson/status/2090516363273969873> (showing current DFW signs marking washing stations as “WUDU STATIONS” and advising that they are “to be used only for ritual purification”); Houston Airports, Press Release, *Houston Airports Refines International Passenger Experience with New Ritual Washing and Prayer Spaces at Bush Airport* (Feb. 21, 2024), <https://perma.cc/DDN5-78FF> (advertising that IAH “opened its first ablution room and prayer room” near an existing interfaith chapel, explicitly naming it as a “Wudu or Tayammum facility,” and noting “strategically placed signage” to guide passengers “who fly Qatar, Emirates and Turkish airlines” to those facilities).

⁷ U.S. CONST. amend. I.

⁸ 49 U.S.C. §§ 114, 44901, 44903; 49 C.F.R. § 1503.207.

⁹ 49 U.S.C. § 47017; Federal Aviation Administration, *Airport Sponsor Assurances* (Apr. 2025), https://www.faa.gov/airports/aip/grant_assurances/assurances-airport-sponsors-2025.pdf.

¹⁰ See generally U.S. Dep’t of Just., Civ. Rts. Div., *Statutes Enforced*, <https://www.justice.gov/crt/page/file/921291/dl>.

Attorney General Blanche and Assistant Attorney General Dhillon

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I look forward to working with you and am committed to ensuring that *all* citizens, regardless of their religion, are treated equally in Texas airports.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Greg Abbott". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Greg" and last name "Abbott" clearly distinguishable.

Greg Abbott
Governor

cc: Deputy Assistant Attorney General Eric Hamilton
United States Attorney Aaron Reitz
United States Attorney Ryan Raybould