

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Congressman Steve King (R-IA), Ranking Member of the House Subcommittee on Immigration, Citizenship, Refugees, Border Security and International Law, today released the text of a letter he has written seeking the Committee's assistance in inviting Ms. Zeituni Onyango to testify in Thursday's hearing regarding the Executive Office for Immigration Review. Ms. Onyango, better known to the general public as President Barack Obama's Aunt, was recently granted asylum by an immigration judge. This decision overruled an earlier judicial determination ordering her deportation. Questions have been raised about whether her relationship to President Obama improperly resulted in her receiving preferential treatment.

The relevant text of Congressman King's letter to Rep. Zoe Lofgren, Chair of the Subcommittee, appears below:

"I am concerned about the public perception that favoritism played a role in the grant of asylum to Ms. Onyango. □ The Boston Globe reported that "the [asylum] decision unleashed a firestorm of criticism from those who felt Onyango received preferential treatment because of her relationship with the president."

□ □

In order to better determine whether favoritism played a role – especially because Ms. Onyango had been earlier turned down for asylum and ordered deported in 2004 before her nephew became president – the Subcommittee needs to hear from Ms. Onyango herself.

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Therefore, I will invite her as the Republican witness on the second panel at Thursday's hearing.

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While I understand that asylum proceedings are generally confidential, Margaret Wong, Ms. Onyango's attorney, has clearly courted press attention regarding this matter. □ In fact, I assume that the press learned that Ms. Onyango received asylum because of comments to the media made by Ms. Wong. □ T
herefore, Ms. Onyango has made herself a public figure and should have no hesitation about appearing before the Subcommittee.

□
Further, in order to facilitate Ms. Onyango's appearance before the Subcommittee, I request that you and Chairman Conyers authorize the Committee to reimburse her travel expenses."

The Subcommittee Hearing is currently scheduled to occur on Thursday, June 17 at 10:00 AM in Room 2141 of the Rayburn House Office Building.

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