Opinion

Photo of the Day | Student Life



A videographer records a skateboarder doing tricks on Fairfield Way on Tuesday, Nov. 10, 2026 in Storrs, Conn. Fairfield Way is a popular skateboarding spot on campus because of the different stone structures. PHOTO BY MADISON HENDRICKS, PHOTO EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS

YOU DON'T FEAR A 'MUSLIM TAKEOVER.' YOU FEAR LOSING CHRISTIANITY'S STATUS QUO IN POLITICS

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In the wake of the recent U.S. midterms with 97 Muslims elected nationwide and a projected 100-plus total, I have witnessed a rising panic from many conservatives fearing the "Muslim takeover" of America. State-sanctioned Sharia law, mandatory hijabs and the eradication of Christianity — these are all things I have heard online in droves as the supposed direction of our country.

The glaring flaw with the logic that roughly 100 Muslim Americans winning public office will somehow result in an Islamic theocracy is, of course, the overwhelming number of Christians already holding office.

According to the Pew Research Center, 87% of voting members of the 119th Congress identified as Christian when it convened in January 2025. Christians constituted a larger percentage of Congress than of the American population itself. Unfortunately, I cannot provide a direct numerical comparison with the 97 Muslim electees, as no equivalent comprehensive count of Christian victories across all levels of government appears to exist. Apparently, Christians winning elections is simply not as noteworthy.

For some indiscernible reason, Christianity's overwhelming dominance in American politics is treated as completely ordinary, while the election of a fraction as many Muslims is suddenly viewed as an existential threat to the American way of life — in a country whose literal first doctrine protects the free practice of religion.

What people fearful of Islam's takeover do not understand is that the root of their fear should come from religious extremism and the erosion of the separation of church and state — not some arbitrary hatred of Islam specifically. It is perfectly reasonable to be concerned about religion bleeding into politics. But why are those concerns only being raised when a religion besides Christianity is entering the picture?

Many fearful of Islam in the U.S. have said their concern comes from how Islam is fundamentally some barbaric, misogynistic religion. And let me clarify before I digress: I am not here to debate whether Islam is any more or less of those things than Christianity. The point I want to make is that debating which religion is more oppressive misses the point entirely.

Firstly, Islam is not some bizarre, barbaric religion foreign to the Western world. Islam and Christianity are both Abrahamic religions that worship an Abrahamic god, just with different theological interpretations. Secondly (and this is not an attack on Christianity), if we judge religions by their worst interpretations and most objectionable passages, neither religion is exempt from criticism.

In 1 Timothy 2:12, women are instructed not to teach or exercise authority over men. In Leviticus 25:44–46, the acquisition and ownership of enslaved people is explicitly permitted. And these beliefs are not just hypothetical: Christianity and biblical scripture were historically used to justify American slavery for decades. Of course, someone reading this might argue that these passages have been taken out of context, that they reflect historical circumstances and cannot be interpreted literally.

That is my point. I do not think Christianity is some plague on the earth, that all Christians believe these things — obviously not. Religious texts written centuries or millennia ago contain outdated beliefs that can be interpreted, debated and applied in wildly different ways. We can pick apart scripture from the Bible or Quran and argue about historical context and the true nature of each religion, but that fact only strengthens the point that any religion can be interpreted and weaponized to justify oppression, and that Islam is not any more deserving of scrutiny or concern than other religions.

Consider Texas, where I completed most of my K-12 schooling. It passed Senate Bill 10 in 2025, requiring public school classrooms to display the Ten Commandments. Now, imagine if the state instead required every classroom to display the Five Pillars of Islam, or Surah Al-Fatihah.

I can only imagine the national outrage. Accusations of Islamic indoctrination, Sharia law and the destruction of American values would be unavoidable. Yet, when the religious doctrine being displayed is Christian, it is a celebration of American history and values. The concern should not be "which religion the government is promoting?", but "why is the government promoting any religious doctrine in the first place?"

Look at Michigan's newly elected senator, Abdul El-Sayed, who has faced countless allegations of ties to the Muslim brotherhood and demands to disavow the group despite no evidence establishing any affiliation. Why haven't we demanded all current 86 Christian senators disavow white supremacist organizations simply because of their religion?

I am not asking anyone to dismiss religious extremism. I am saying that we cannot pick and choose which religions should automatically raise concern. If our fear is the government enforcing religious doctrine, the solution is defending the separation of church and state — not panicking when the religion in question happens to be one other than Christianity.

IN MEDIAS RES: NED LAMONT MUST PRIORITIZE CLIMATE ACTION IN HIS THIRD TERM

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Last week, Ned Lamont secured his third term as governor of Connecticut amid a nationwide "blue wave" that swept Democrats into state office. With his defeat of Republican nominee and state senator Ryan Fazio, he will be the second governor in Connecticut history to serve for three terms since our state's transition to four-year gubernatorial terms in 1950.

Lamont first entered the political spotlight in 2006 as an unlikely challenger and dissident to then-incumbent Senator Joseph Lieberman, a former Democrat vice-presidential nominee heavily favored to win re-election. Lamont, however, tapped into opposition to the U.S. war in Iraq and achieved a stunning primary upset, despite his later defeat in the general election.

However, the governor who marched steadily to the drumbeat of social politics has now fallen behind and off-tempo to our climate crisis. Despite Connecticut's vulnerability to climate change, Lamont has consistently ignored the perils of the fossil fuel industry. In 2025, in collaboration with the Trump Administration, Lamont announced support for expanding fracked natural gas pipelines from Pennsylvania into New England and argued that natural gas could serve as a transitional fuel to replace "dirtier" winter oil-fired plants. Lamont later turned down a sustainable geothermal heating system for the Capitol Area System in favor of a new fossil fuel expansion system. Now, he has permitted fossil fuel monopolies Enbridge and Eversource to crisscross our state with natural gas pipeline expansions. Additionally, despite his claim that natural gas is a necessary transition fuel, he has not advanced any plans to transition out of it.

Furthermore, Lamont has ignored the dangers of natural gas. While he is correct that natural gas is, on the surface, cleaner than burning oil or coal, it is not a just or sustainable alternative. When life cycle emissions and leakage are accounted for, natural gas can match or even exceed the climate-warming impact of coal. Natural gas, which is composed of methane, is notorious for leaking from pipelines and fuel stations, and as a partial failure of government oversight, its leakage is often undervalued in impact analysis. The International Energy Agency estimates that actual energy-related methane emissions are 80% higher than the amounts reported by countries to the United Nations. Although short-lived, methane gas traps 86 times more heat in the atmosphere over a 20-year period compared to carbon dioxide, the primary pollutant of oil and gas. Methane is also a major chemical precursor to ground-level ozone — a dangerous air pollutant linked to over one million annual premature deaths, as well as respiratory illnesses like asthma and heart disease. This allowance of methane pollution is inexcusable considering Connecticut's high asthma rate — Hartford is the eighth ranked asthma capital in the U.S. Lamont's decision to continue to expand natural gas infrastructure, then, is ignorant of his constituent's health.

Connecticut is no stranger to the ill-effects of our warming planet. We notice it in the early closings of our ski mountains, the slow disappearance of our marine fishing industries and the increasingly lackluster color of our prided fall foliage. We see it in more damaging ways too — our rapidly changing climate places Connecticut at higher risk of hurricanes and sudden torrential downpours each year. Increased flooding has caused our state to invest millions in stormwater prevention measures, yet overflow has become an increasing issue as torrential downpours carry raw sewage into our rivers. Wildfires — once relatively few and far between in our state — are escalating in frequency as rising temperatures and sustained droughts become a new norm. Sea level rise from glacial melt threatens to overcome our state's beloved shoreline. Although Lamont's administration has set aside funding to help communities adapt to the worst impacts of climate change, he has failed to trace these issues back to their root cause: our own continued reliance on fossil fuels. Lamont's expansion of methane gas infrastructure has not weaned our state away from the worst of climate change — instead, he has deepened our dependence on the industries responsible for the many problems our communities already face.

In 2022, Lamont admonished lapses in climate policy nationwide on X: "there are more damn excuses for inaction on climate change than I care to hear. We don't accept that here in Connecticut." True to the point, he announced that Connecticut's grid would be carbon neutral by 2040. Lamont's third term will take him until 2031, just nine years short of his proposed deadline. If Lamont wants to make good on his promise, he must recognize the detriment a reliance on methane gas poses to our environment, health and climate goals.

Our re-elected governor once built his political career on challenging the status quo. Now, he risks embodying the very same inaction he once criticized. If he intends to make good on his past promises, he must reemphasize Connecticut's commitment to the climate and reject our growing reliance on natural gas.



LOGO BY COLBI LORANGER, ASSOCIATE ARTIST EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS