

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

March 5, 2017

New Hampshire Conference – United Church of Christ  
140 Sheep Davis Road  
Pembroke, NH 03275

Dear Friends,

Thank you for the invitation to join you for this afternoon's event. Please know that I am with you in spirit as you screen 'The White Helmets,' an award-winning film that details the dangerous work of volunteers who provide assistance to people caught in Syria's civil war.

Like you, I have watched with horror the continued violence perpetrated against the Syrian people. These actions have rightly drawn outrage from the United States and much of the international community. They have also provoked a sense of compassion and an urge to help the innocent civilians thrust into the middle of a civil war. Volunteers in the Syrian Civil Defense exemplify these and many more virtues. White Helmets rush into danger so they can usher others to safety.

Their personal stories and the lives they led before the war – barbers, sculptors, high school and university students, farmers, police officers, construction workers – are incredibly moving and ably captured in this film. What is perhaps most inspiring is that – despite enduring extreme hardship and witnessing unthinkable suffering – many of these people are still filled with hope. They speak of a bright future in Syria – a rebuilt country where citizens can resume their lives free of danger and refugees who fled the violence can safely return. I know this is a hope shared by many in this room.

Thank you to the United Church of Christ and the Syrian Refugee Mission group for your work to organize and sponsor today's event. Your efforts will raise community awareness of what is happening on the ground in Syria.

I wish you all the best in your future endeavors.

Sincerely,



Jeanne Shaheen  
United States Senator