

2015-J3829

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION condemning violence, bigotry, and hateful rhetoric towards Muslims, and celebrating our Nation's history of tolerance towards all faiths in the State of New York

WHEREAS, The victims of anti-Muslim hate crimes and rhetoric have faced physical, verbal, and emotional abuse because they were Muslim or believed to be Muslim; and

WHEREAS, The constitutional right to freedom of religious practice is a cherished American value and violence or hate speech towards any community based on their faith is in contravention of our founding principles; and

WHEREAS, There are thousands of Muslims in New York State, a community made up of many diverse beliefs and cultures, and both immigrants and native-born New Yorkers; and

WHEREAS, New York State's Muslim community is recognized as having made innumerable contributions to the cultural and economic fabric and well-being of our society; and

WHEREAS, Hateful and intolerant acts against Muslims, or those perceived to be Muslim, are contrary to the American values of acceptance, welcoming, and fellowship with those of all faiths, beliefs, and cultures; and

WHEREAS, These acts affect not only the individual victims but also their families, communities, and the entire group whose faith or beliefs were the motivation for the act; and

WHEREAS, Muslim women who wear hijabs, headscarves, or other religious articles of clothing have been disproportionately targeted because of their religious clothing, articles, or observances; and

WHEREAS, The rise of hateful and anti-Muslim speech, violence, and cultural ignorance plays into the false narrative spread by terrorist

groups of Western hatred of Islam, and can encourage certain individuals to react in extreme and violent ways; and

WHEREAS, Religious extremism that promotes violence or bigotry in the name of faith is not the property of any specific faith and must be opposed in all its forms whenever undertaken by any member of any faith; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to condemn violence, bigotry, and hateful rhetoric towards Muslims, and to celebrate our Nation's history of tolerance towards all faiths in the State of New York; and be it further

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause further to express its condolences for the victims of anti-Muslim hate crimes and all hate crimes; to steadfastly confirm its dedication to the rights and dignity of all its citizens of all faiths, beliefs, and cultures; to denounce in the strongest terms the increase of intimidation, violence, vandalism, arson, and other hate crimes targeted against mosques, Muslims or those perceived to be Muslim; to recognize that the Muslim community in New York State has made countless positive contributions to our society; to declare that the civil rights and civil liberties of people of all faiths should be protected and preserved; to urge local, State and Federal law enforcement authorities to work to prevent hate crimes and to prosecute to the fullest extent of the law those perpetrators of hate crimes; and to reaffirm the inalienable right of every individual to live without fear and intimidation, and to practice their freedom of faith.