

Council Members Golby, Applyrs, Bailey, Commisso, Conti, Doesschate, Fahey, Herring, Igoe, Kimbrough, Kornegay, Krasher and O'Brien with the support of Council President McLaughlin introduced the following:

Resolution Number 5.11.16R

RESOLUTION OF THE COMMON COUNCIL STATING THAT THE CITY OF ALBANY STANDS WITH MUSLIM NEIGHBORS AGAINST ISLAMOPHOBIA

WHEREAS, throughout its long history, the City of Albany has been built on the strength of its ethnic, racial, and religious diversity; and

WHEREAS, Albany is a city of immigrants. According to U.S. Census data, in 2013, 11.25% of city of Albany residents were born outside of the United States, ranking our city sixth of the top ten cities in New York State with foreign-born populations; and

WHEREAS, as of 2014, Muslims represented about 1.5% of the City of Albany's total estimated population of 97,856, or nearly 1,500 residents; and

WHEREAS, the regional Muslim population is over 10,000 and includes immigrants from Iraq, Afghanistan, Syria, Turkey, Bosnia, Malaysia, Egypt, Pakistan, Iran, India, and African nations, as well as American-born Muslims, who attend six mosques, one of them in the City of Albany; and

WHEREAS, Muslims are integral members of our community, beginning with children attending Albany's schools and adults represented in all professions including city employees, store clerks, laborers, small business owners, physicians, medical technicians, college professors, chemists, engineers, accountants, artists, musicians, and business leaders; and

WHEREAS, since the Paris terrorist attacks in November 2015, and the San Bernardino terrorist attacks in California in December 2015, fear of Muslims has increased nationwide; and

WHEREAS, incidents of violence and hatred against Muslims, and inflammatory comments by public figures, have also increased, with the Council on Islamic-American Relations (CAIR) stating that it "has received more reports about acts of Islamophobic violence, threats, intimidation, and discrimination targeting American Muslims (or those perceived to be Muslim) and Islamic institutions since the Paris attacks than during any other limited period of time since the 9/11 terror attacks;" and

WHEREAS, there are prejudicial and unjust actions from our nation's history, such as the placement of Japanese residents in internment camps during WWII, that show the harmful and consequential results of blaming an entire group of people based on their race, religion, culture, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender for the actions of a small segment of that population; and

WHEREAS, in response to the San Bernardino attack, President Obama, in a national televised speech on December 6, rejected the view that there should be a war on Islam; acknowledged that the vast majority of the victims of terrorism are Muslims and that extremists are a "tiny fraction" of Muslims worldwide; and rejected both discrimination against American Muslims and a religious test for those admitted to this country, saying that "Muslim Americans are our friends and neighbors, our co-workers, our sports heroes, and yes, they are our men and women in uniform who are willing to die in defense of our country..." and

WHEREAS, President Obama also said, “Let’s not forget that freedom is more powerful than fear.”

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Common Council of the City of Albany hereby declares that fear will not divide us; that we recognize that the threats posed by Islamophobia to our American values of religious freedom and cultural diversity are threats against our very way of life in both the City of Albany and the United States; and that we as a community stand firmly with our Muslim neighbors against Islamophobia in all its manifestations; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Common Council of the City of Albany requests that the Clerk of this Council forward copies of this resolution to locally elected federal, state, and county officials.

To: Mr. Nala Woodard, City Clerk
From: Leah Golby, Council Member
Re: Request for Common Council Legislation
Supporting Memorandum
Date: December 23, 2015

RESOLUTION NUMBER 5.11.16R

TITLE

RESOLUTION OF THE COMMON COUNCIL STATING THAT THE CITY OF ALBANY STANDS WITH MUSLIM RESIDENTS AGAINST ISLAMOPHOBIA

GENERAL PURPOSE OF LEGISLATION

To show support for Muslim residents who are an integral part of our community and to stand against hatred and fear.

NECESSITY FOR LEGISLATION AND ANY CHANGE TO EXISTING LAW

To show support for neighbors facing adversity. No change to existing law.

EXPLANATION OF DEADLINE OR REQUESTED TIME FRAME FOR PASSAGE

It is requested that this be passed at the first January meeting of 2016 since it is a timely issue.

SPECIFICS OF BIDDING OR OTHER PROCUREMENT PROCESS (if applicable)

N/A

SPECIFICS OF REAL PROPERTY SALE OR ACQUISITION (if applicable)

N/A

FISCAL IMPACT(S)

N/A
