

June 8, 2017

Mayor Stephanie A. Miner  
233 East Washington Street  
203 City Hall  
Syracuse, New York 13202  
[Mayor@SyrGov.net](mailto:Mayor@SyrGov.net)

Dear Mayor Miner,

We write to ask you to join us in publicly embracing our nation's core values of pluralism, diversity, and liberty for all while firmly rejecting the forces of hate and bigotry that seek to divide us.

As you may be aware, ACT for America, the nation's largest anti-Muslim hate group, has called for a protest in Syracuse as part of a coordinated series of [protests in over 20 cities across the nation](#) on June 10th. Timed during the Islamic month of Ramadan when Muslims around the world fast during the daylight hours, these protests have been disingenuously branded "March Against Sharia" and explicitly target Muslims at a time when hatred and bigotry has swept the nation.

ACT's founder, Brigitte Gabriel, regularly vilifies Muslims, claiming that practicing Muslims cannot be loyal to the United States. She also once said that "every practicing Muslim is a radical Muslim" and that Muslims are a "natural threat to civilized people of the world, particularly Western society." Both she and ACT have had a long history of promoting policies at the federal and state levels intended to manufacture fear of Muslims, and the group has been named a hate group by the Southern Poverty Law Center.

We are deeply concerned about the type of message that these protests send to the American public and to the good people in your city--that it is acceptable to vilify people simply because of their faith.

Between 2014 and 2015, FBI data indicates that hate crimes against Muslims increased by 67%. Bias-motivated violence continues to target Muslims, Arabs, South Asians, and a number of other communities. Just this year alone there have been numerous murders of individuals who are Muslim or were targeted based on anti-Muslim bigotry, regardless of their religion. In addition, several mosques around the country have been targeted by arson. Negative misperceptions of Muslims have also resulted in children being the target of bullying and harassment across the country--one poll conducted by the Institute for

Social Policy and Understanding suggests that more than forty percent of Muslim children in grades K-12 are bullied because of their faith.

Now, more than ever, we must come together and support one another from viewpoints and groups that seek to divide us.

We, the undersigned national and local civil rights, faith-based, and community organizations, ask that you use your voice as an elected representative of your city to reject bigotry. We urge you to issue an official statement to reiterate to the people of your city that every person is welcome and has the right to feel secure regardless of how they worship, where they're from, or who they love. Furthermore, we ask that you recognize that American Muslims have been an essential part of America's fabric since before our nation was founded. The members of your community, Muslim and non-Muslim alike, must be reassured that bigotry, hatred, and prejudice against any individual or group based on their faith, gender, ethnicity, nationality, race, sexual orientation, or disability status will not be tolerated.

We look forward to hearing from you and hope that we can work closely with you in the future to positively engage all communities.

Please contact Madihha Ahussain at [madihha@muslimadvocates.org](mailto:madihha@muslimadvocates.org) (Muslim Advocates), Lindsay Schubiner at [lindsay@newcomm.org](mailto:lindsay@newcomm.org) (Center for New Community), and Ilhan Cagri at [ilhan@mpac.org](mailto:ilhan@mpac.org) (Muslim Public Affairs Council) with any questions or to discuss this further.

Thank you in advance for your partnership and principled leadership.

Sincerely,

#GetOrganizedBrooklyn

18MR.org

A Center of Christian-Muslim Engagement for Peace and Justice, Lutheran School of  
Theology at Chicago

Advocates for Youth

American Friends Service Committee

American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC)

Americans United for Separation of Church and State

Amnesty International USA

Anti-Defamation League

Arab American Institute  
Asian Americans Advancing Justice (AAJC)  
Auburn Theological Seminary  
Bend the Arc Jewish Action  
CAIR-MN  
California Immigrant Policy Center  
Center for New Community  
Church World Service  
Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights (CHIRLA)  
Colorado Muslim Speakers Bureau  
Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR)  
CREDO  
Dominican Sisters of Houston  
El CENTRO de Igualdad y Derechos  
Emgage  
Fair Immigration Reform Movement (FIRM)  
Faith in Public Life  
Franciscan Action Network  
Friends Committee on National Legislation  
GSA Network  
Harvard Islamic Society  
Hispanic Federation  
Hollaback Bosnia and Herzegovina  
Hollaback!  
Hollaback! Detroit  
Hollaback! Seattle  
Holy Spirit Missionary Sisters - JPIC - USA  
ICNA Council for Social Justice  
Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights  
Interfaith Worker Justice  
International Refugee Assistance Project at the Urban Justice Center  
Islamic Networks Group (ING)  
Islamic Society of North America (ISNA)  
Islamic Speakers Bureau of Arizona  
Jewish Community Relations Council  
Jewish Council for Public Affairs  
Jewish Voice for Peace - Chicago  
Jewish Voice for Peace - Denver  
Jewish Voice for Peace - Northern New Jersey

Jewish Voice for Peace - Triangle, NC  
Michigan Muslim Community Council  
Muslim Advocates  
Muslim Alliance of Indiana  
Muslim Community Network  
Muslim Justice League  
Muslim Public Affairs Council  
National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs  
National Council of Jewish Women  
National Council of La Raza  
National Disaster Interfaiths Network  
National Hispanic Media Coalition  
National Immigration Law Center  
National Iranian American Council  
National Religious Campaign Against Torture  
NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice  
New York Disaster Interfaith Services (NYDIS)  
OCA - Asian Pacific American Advocates  
OneAmerica  
Physicians for Policy Action  
Poligon Education Fund  
PRC  
Presbyterian Church (USA)  
Presbyterian Church (USA) Washington Office of Public Witness  
Refugee & Immigration Ministries, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)  
Shoulder to Shoulder  
SIREN  
South Asian Americans Leading Together  
Southern Poverty Law Center  
Syracuse Cultural Workers  
The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights  
The Revolutionary Love Project  
The Sikh Coalition  
The United Methodist Church - General Board of Church and Society  
Together We Rise CT  
T'ruah: The Rabbinic Call for Human Rights  
Union for Reform Judaism  
Unitarian Universalist Association  
Unitarian Universalist College of Social Justice

Unitarian Universalist Mass Action Network  
Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC)  
United Church of Christ, Justice and Witness Ministries  
UURISE - Unitarian Universalist Refugee & Immigrant Services & Education  
Veterans for American Ideals  
We Belong Together  
Welcoming Gainesville and Alachua County  
Women In Islam Inc  
Women's March Michigan  
Workers' Center of Central New York