

The Fight Against Hate: Supporting Anti-Hate Crime Legislations

The American Muslim community is experiencing a troubling rise in hate crimes that must be addressed. The FBI reports an increase of 67% in hate crimes against American Muslims from 2014 to 2015, and trends only show this increasing since then.

- From just Nov. 9, 2016 through March 31, 2017, 1,893 hate crimes occurred.
- Crimes include multiple attacks against mosques and Islamic centers, and against individuals resulting in injury and/or deaths.
- American Muslims are reporting, at an alarming rate, incidents of discrimination and harassment in public spaces, places of business, and even at schools.



Although there is an increased recognition of hate crimes and efforts have been made to address this problem, *much more needs to be done*. We need a transparent process to develop a comprehensive strategy to combat the rising hate crime problem. To be effective, this strategy must be informed by American Muslim organizations and institutions, law enforcement and judicial bodies at all levels, and hate crimes and civil liberties organizations.

The strategy should be codified through legislation at the state and federal level and should seek to do the following:

1. Strengthen reporting of hate crimes
2. Improve data collection and analysis
3. Train law enforcement and judicial bodies
4. Educate the public
5. Increase penalties for perpetrators

Congress and state legislatures should also make resources available to affected individuals and communities following hate crime incidents. The psychological effects that these attacks and anti-Muslim rhetoric have on the community at large, especially the youth, are often overlooked. This is critical considering that 284 of the 1,893 hate crimes that

occurred between November 9, 2016 and March 31, 2017 were at primary and secondary schools.

Lastly, while we cannot end hate crimes completely, elected officials can and should help deter future attacks by improving the public discourse. They should immediately condemn hate speech and actions whenever they occur, and should stand strongly with the affected community to set an example for others in the public sphere to follow. Together we can overcome this problem and render it to the margins where it belongs.

This is why we successfully partnered with the Muslim Public Affairs Council in support of Senate Resolution 118, which passed unanimously in April 2017. We are now turning our attention to getting the same resolution passed in the U.S. House of Representatives.

[Click here to tell Congress to support House Resolution 257 in support of better reporting and data collection on hate crimes and to denounce attacks against religious and ethnic minorities, especially Muslims.](#)