



Legislation Text

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Introduced by: Councilmember Henry

A Resolution Entitled

A Council Resolution concerning **Condemning Violence and Hate Speech**

For the purpose of condemning violence and hate speech; expressing solidarity with Muslims and all those targeted for their ethnicity, race, or religion; and categorically rejecting political tactics that use fear to manipulate voters or to gain power or influence.

Recitals

Whereas, the United States was founded by immigrants, many fleeing religious persecution, who enshrined freedom of religion as one of our nation's fundamental legal and ethical principles.

Whereas, the history of Islam in the United States began even before its founding when African Muslims were enslaved and brought to the Americas, where they later helped in numerous ways to build this country, including sacrificing their lives on the line in every major war from the Revolutionary War on.

Whereas, there are more than 3 million Muslims living in the United States today, and, according to a 2010 survey, approximately 15,000 living in the Baltimore metropolitan area, making invaluable contributions to our economy, our social and political life, and our culture.

Whereas, there has been an unprecedented backlash since 9/11 in the form of hate crimes and employment discrimination toward Arab and Muslim Americans and those perceived as Muslims.

Whereas, Arab and Muslim Americans, and those perceived as Muslims, are frequently the targets of abusive and discriminatory police practices sanctioned by the state including surveillance in their neighborhoods and places of worship.

Whereas, we are saddened and outraged at the recent escalation of hateful rhetoric against Muslims, those perceived to be Muslims, immigrants, and all people of color, and we are particularly concerned to see political figures and elected government officials leading this escalation and using it in order to gain power.

Whereas, in the face of extreme bigotry and violence, Muslim communities and their leaders are using the language and teachings of Islam to promote peace, justice, and service, and their institutions are continuing to play an essential societal role providing charitable and humanitarian services to those in need.

Whereas, we, as elected representatives of the people, have a special responsibility not to stay silent in the face of hate violence and discrimination against any of our constituents or countrymen.

Now, therefore, be it resolved by the City Council of Baltimore, that the Council condemns all hateful

speech and violent action directed at Muslims, those perceived to be Muslims, immigrants and people of color; categorically rejects political tactics that use fear to manipulate voters or to gain power or influence; commits to pursuing a policy agenda that affirms civil and human rights, and ensures that those targeted on the basis of race, religion or immigration status can turn to government without fear of recrimination; and reaffirms the value of a pluralistic society, the beauty of a culture composed of multiple cultures, and the inalienable right of every person to live and practice their faith without fear.

And be it further resolved, That a copy of this Resolution be sent to the Mayor and the Mayor's Legislative Liaison to the City Council.