

**Condemning Violence And Hate Speech And Expressing Solidarity
With Muslims And All Those Targeted For Their Ethnicity, Race Or
Religion**

Referred to: The Laws and Rules, Governmental Services Committee (Chairman Roberts and Legislators Belfiglio, Donaldson, R. Parete and Rodriguez)

Legislator Jennifer Schwartz Berky and Legislators Delaune, Donaldson, Greene, Heppner and Rodriguez offer the following:

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; and

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; and

WHEREAS there are more than 3 million Muslims living in the United States today, and approximately 1,522 living in the County of Ulster, making invaluable contributions to our economy, our social and political life, and our culture; and

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; and

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; and

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; and

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 and justice and service, and their institutions are continuing to play an essential societal role providing charitable and humanitarian services to those in need; and

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

Resolution No. 425 October 18, 2016

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RESOLVED, the Ulster County Legislature condemns all hateful speech and violent action directed at Muslims, those perceived to be Muslims, immigrants and people of color; and, be it further

RESOLVED, the Ulster County Legislature categorically rejects political tactics that use fear to manipulate voters or to gain power or influence; and, be it further

RESOLVED, the Ulster County Legislature 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, be it further

RESOLVED, the Ulster County Legislature 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 moves its adoption.

ADOPTED BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE:

AYES:

NOES:

Passed Committee: Laws and Rules, Governmental Services on _____.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

NONE