



P.O. Box 32159
Newark, NJ 07102

Tel: 973-642-2086
Fax: 973-642-6523

info@aclu-nj.org
www.aclu-nj.org

DIANE Du BRULE
Interim Executive Director

EDWARD BAROCAS
Legal Director

January 19, 2017

Dear Muslim Community Leader,

Like many across New Jersey and America, we have been disgusted and saddened by recent displays of anti-Muslim rhetoric and bigotry in our nation. We write to reiterate the ACLU's role as an ally with the Muslim community in the struggle for religious freedom and equality.

It's important to us that you know the ACLU of New Jersey will do everything in its power to help defend your rights if they are threatened, as well as the rights of your fellow worshippers, community members, and your families. We invite you to share with them how to file a request for legal assistance with the ACLU of New Jersey – via www.aclu-nj.org/intake or 973-642-2084 – and encourage you to reach out to us if you need our help or believe your civil liberties may have been violated. While some requests for assistance may go beyond the ACLU's scope of defending constitutional rights, be assured that the ACLU is here to help.

We offer additional resources beyond legal advocacy that you may find useful. Staff members regularly give Know Your Rights presentations for congregations, schools, and other groups, and we welcome you to request one. You can request written publications and find ACLU-NJ materials online about knowing your rights: the rights of immigrants, your rights during police interactions, the rights of protesters, and others. (The online versions can be found at: <https://www.aclu-nj.org/publications>) In short, we want you to know that the ACLU of New Jersey, as always, is here to support you and stand up for your rights.

For almost a century, the ACLU has defended the First Amendment rights of all Americans. Throughout that time, we have also worked to combat racial profiling and ethnic discrimination. We come to the aid of people whose rights are most vulnerable – often religious and ethnic minorities. The ACLU opposed the internment of Japanese-Americans following the attack on Pearl Harbor, and we challenged discrimination against Muslims and people of Middle Eastern and South Asian descent instituted under the guise of “national security” after the September 11 attacks.

In New Jersey, the ACLU has long been active in supporting Muslim congregations that have faced discrimination in opening mosques in their communities. We have advocated for people who have been refused service because they wore modest clothing in accord with Islamic traditions. We have opposed invasive surveillance by the New York Police Department that targeted people based on nothing other than their Muslim faith. We have and will continue to assist individuals who are called for FBI interviews about Muslim communities.

In times of division, we see an opportunity to build and strengthen bridges. The ACLU stands with the Muslim community. If you or members of your community feel your rights have been violated as a result of anti-Muslim bigotry, please feel free to contact us without hesitation.

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We look forward to hearing from you with any questions, suggestions or concerns. If you would like to discuss ways to work together or request an ACLU speaker, please contact us directly.

Sincerely,

DIANE Du BRULE
Interim Executive Director

ED BAROCAS
Legal Director