

2024 -- H 7704

LC004932

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2024

HOUSE RESOLUTION

STRONGLY CONDEMNING ISLAMOPHOBIA

Introduced By: Representatives Ajello, Ackerman, Tanzi, Sanchez, Felix, Potter, Cruz,
Boylan, Blazejewski, and Shekarchi

Date Introduced: February 27, 2024

Referred To: House read and passed

1 WHEREAS, Islamophobia is defined "as a dislike of or prejudice against Islam or
2 Muslims, especially as a political force" and is a growing abhorrence and important area of
3 concern in our State and across the country; and

4 WHEREAS, Islamophobia unjustly creates fear or hatred of Muslims, to their politics or
5 culture, and to Islam and the religiosity of Muslims; and

6 WHEREAS, Over the past decade, letters have been sent to mosques in six states
7 promising to "cleanse" America of Muslims. Rhode Island's oldest mosque was threatened and
8 defaced with anti-Muslim graffiti, while mosques in Florida and Texas were set ablaze in cases
9 ruled as arson; and

10 WHEREAS, Many Muslims report not feeling respected or safe, and moreover, live in
11 fear. In December of 2023, 20 year-old Brown University student, Hisham Awartani was
12 paralyzed from the chest down, when he was shot in a hate crime, along with two other students,
13 while visiting relatives for Thanksgiving in Burlington, Vermont. With no provocation or
14 warning, the shooter simply stepped off his porch and opened fired on the three innocent students;
15 and

16 WHEREAS, Closer to home, Mustafa Ramos, "a jovial man with a giant smile", was
17 setting up a table before prayers outside the Islamic Center in Providence, when he was shot by a
18 man who had waited nearly half an hour to attack. It is believed that Mr. Ramos was a target
19 based solely on his faith; and

20 WHEREAS, Rhode Island is the birthplace and was proudly formed on the belief of

1 guaranteed religious freedom, freedom to worship as one chooses; and

2 WHEREAS, The rising tide of Islamophobia is indefensible and has no place in our lives,
3 our State and this World; now, therefore be it

4 RESOLVED, That this House of Representatives of the State of Rhode Island hereby
5 condemns and denounces all forms of Islamophobia in the State of Rhode Island and the United
6 States, and moreover urges all our citizens to remain vigilant in protecting our Muslim-American
7 neighbors from all acts of hate, crime, and unlawful discrimination and persecution; and be it
8 further

9 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to
10 transmit duly certified copies of this resolution to the Islamic Center of Rhode Island and the
11 Council on American-Islamic Relations, Mustafa Ramos c/o the Islamic Center in Providence,
12 and Hisham Awartani c/o Brown University.

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