**Facts from** [**www.islamfactcheck.org**](http://www.islamfactcheck.org) **about American Muslims to use in supporting your key messages or to talk about contributions.**

* FACT: According to a [2001 U.S. Department of Defense statement](https://web.archive.org/web/20120414193112/http:/www.defense.gov/News/NewsArticle.aspx?ID=44689), between 10,000 and 20,000 American Muslims serve honorably in the U.S. military.
* FACT: Not only are [10,000 to 20,000 American Muslims serving with honor and distinction](https://web.archive.org/web/20120414193112/http:/www.defense.gov/News/NewsArticle.aspx?ID=44689) in the U.S. armed forces, many have given their lives in service to our nation, including [Specialist Kareem R. Khan](http://www.arlingtoncemetery.net/krkhan.htm), [Major James Ahearn](http://www.arlingtoncemetery.net/jmahearn.htm), [Specialist Rasheed Sahib](http://projects.militarytimes.com/valor/army-spc-rasheed-sahib/256610), and [Captain Humayun S.M. Khan](http://www.arlingtoncemetery.net/hsmkhan.htm).
* FACT: According to a [2011 Harvard University research study](http://muslimamericansurvey.org/pdf/march82011.pdf), the largest study of American Muslims at the time, the more involved a Muslim person is in mosque-related activities and the more religious the person is, the more likely she/he is to believe that Islam is compatible with political participation in the U.S. The study states that “…[mosques in America] have been proven to be associated with a higher level of civic engagement, and to contribute greatly in creating a more informed citizenry.” This indicates that mosques in America help increase American Muslims’ participation in American civic life.
* FACT:  A [2009 Gallup Poll on American Muslims](http://www.gallup.com/poll/116260/muslim-americans-exemplify-diversity-potential.aspx) found that American Muslim women are the second most highly educated religious community in the U.S., and are just as likely as American Muslim men to have a college degree or higher education.
* FACT:  [The 2009 Gallup Poll on American Muslims also found](http://www.gallup.com/poll/116260/muslim-americans-exemplify-diversity-potential.aspx) that the wage gap between American Muslim men and women is nearly non-existent.
* FACT:  [The 2009 Gallup Poll on American Muslims also found](http://www.gallup.com/poll/116260/muslim-americans-exemplify-diversity-potential.aspx) that 42% of American Muslim women hold a college or post graduate degree, compared with 58% of American Jewish women, 33% of American Protestant women and 28% of American Catholic women holding college or post graduate degrees.
* FACT: While no federal agency collects data on harassment and discrimination experienced by children based on their religion, according to [community-based surveys](https://www.ing.org/2011/10/03/ings-work-helps-to-prevent-bullying-of-muslim-studentsbbb-accreditation-93011/), 80% of American Muslim youth have reported being targets of taunts and harassment, oftentimes in front of teachers and school administrators.
* FACT: Violent hate crimes, as well as bullying and discrimination, against American Muslims and those perceived to be Muslim have [increased in recent years and, according to the FBI, remain at high levels](http://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonkblog/wp/2015/02/11/anti-muslim-hate-crimes-are-still-five-times-more-common-today-than-before-911/), posing a real and growing threat to the lives of millions of American Muslim families and children.
* Never before in our nation’s history, have reported anti-Muslim hate crimes been as high in number or in severity as in 2015. Throughout 2015, [CAIR](http://www.cair.com) offices nationwide received, on average, at least one daily report of hate crimes targeting an American Muslim or someone perceived to be Muslim.
* [A study conducted by Media Tenor of primetime news 2007-2013](http://us.mediatenor.com/en/library/speeches/download/203_e7b0fd1fe879affa8739882f73c12e27) found that Islam is featured in primetime news more than any other religion, and the coverage is overwhelmingly negative.
* Too often, we have seen waves of religiously loaded news coverage of crimes and commentary when the suspect is Muslim, result in surges of anti-Muslim hate violence and bullying of Muslim children. Research shows that it’s the news coverage and commentary, not the event itself, that determines how the public will react and whether members of a minority group will face hate violence. Research by [University of Hawaii](https://web.archive.org/web/20150402113320/http:/www.hawaii.edu/hivandaids/Racism,_Ethnicity_and_Hate_Crime.pdf), [University of Exeter](http://r20.rs6.net/tn.jsp?f=001vjJD2ejTYtYELL_4TMMiRjuOgnM6NaKLndNGnk8qer7ybDSHySr7ws2S82jfDPtjqBMm88rPf6reJQLSM6Lu7JnPybokks8j4Tc61oSbE5lRRHvncpMqEf0Gwgj7biiYpnpAapk2YH4N024wimb3CVCPY1tgndBR34CrNAz36aiEd6ogRszKArFfwPx-pxTm2-mmnHzv-LPxkNtmw_XQGtoNiQFzO4ec&c=Rjq_ICiBorrgvqPf2LoJhhpgmVxmz5X-EE6BFV8V3ys4SlG7Xnh0Vg==&ch=1T3VioblBRlM61RHaHHXztzxjSa-tt39IlhkMvUsPIV6QlpaBVdbeA==) & [National Hispanic Media Coalition](http://r20.rs6.net/tn.jsp?f=001vjJD2ejTYtYELL_4TMMiRjuOgnM6NaKLndNGnk8qer7ybDSHySr7ws2S82jfDPtjwAn4P8Fnx86-_PSCqVzrMNxk5Yk9ZQeMEGNyTbNev6EzKEJ8nDNK07mXgGNFgvxir9uM1GHqQI1OTWgYGwLf0KgsQUvLGoPEySwPC9rF0VY3bIKl7IcWHQn95WW09v9jcrIetJfDniAmWhCqXtHyyyTRJcHmh1aVTqHyge1u-x7dYH7ZWRW0iqFU0G3gfZZjojX4S4s-14k=&c=Rjq_ICiBorrgvqPf2LoJhhpgmVxmz5X-EE6BFV8V3ys4SlG7Xnh0Vg==&ch=1T3VioblBRlM61RHaHHXztzxjSa-tt39IlhkMvUsPIV6QlpaBVdbeA==) indicate that media content can have a direct effect on hate and prejudice against minority groups. Accurate language can inform readers, while loaded language misleads readers and fuels hate and prejudice.
* FACT:  [The FBI’s hate crimes statistics show that in 2013](https://www.fbi.gov/about-us/cjis/ucr/hate-crime/2013/tables/1tabledatadecpdf/table_1_incidents_offenses_victims_and_known_offenders_by_bias_motivation_2013.xls), 167 out of 1,223 religiously based hate crimes (13.7%) were anti-Muslim. A [U.S. Department of Justice press release](http://ojp.gov/newsroom/pressreleases/2013/ojppr032113.pdf) says that nearly two out of three hate crimes are not reported, because victims of hate crimes often fear that the police will not be able to help. According to [an article in the Washington Post,](http://www.washingtonpost.com/posteverything/wp/2015/02/17/its-hard-to-prove-any-hate-crime-but-for-muslim-victims-its-especially-tough/) hate crimes against American Muslims are especially under-reported.

**Possible Christian teachings to use to appeal to Christian audiences by reminding of religious values**

As a bible-believing [born-again if applicable] Christian, my support of our American Muslim neighbors comes from the teachings of Jesus Christ. Jesus taught us to “do to others what you would have them do to you”. As a bible-believing, born-again Christian, I sincerely believe that, and that is part of what I teach as a pastor.

This is about how we as followers of Christ treat others. God called us to love each other. It’s our job to draw near to Christ and love all God’s children.”

What I teach as a pastor is the same as what my \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ [parents, pastor] taught me. Because my \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ [parents, pastor] \_\_\_\_\_ [were/was] wonderful. And they taught us to love everyone.

Jesus tells us that we are all children of God. And so if we’re children of God, it is hard to discriminate against anyone. It is hard to exclude anyone. It is hard not to love everyone. And doing that, you have to make sure that those children of God, your sisters and brothers have all the opportunities to raise and educate their children, to work where they wish to, to live where they wish to, that’s what the Golden Rule means to me. At the end of the day, you know, it’s all about fairness. It’s all about equality. It’s all about justice. And it’s all about love. And that’s why I am proud to say that as a (born-again) Christian, I’m going to  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ [use my voice to tell the stories of the lives and contributions of my American Muslim neighbors or some concrete public educational actions we want audiences to take].

“I struggled with the notion of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ [my daughter/son converting] and it was compassion that broke in. My shift came when I realized that at the very core of my Christianity is the compassion that God has shown towards me.”

“One of the main things that I want to happen is to open the arms of Jesus Christ to people that have been \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.”

And that’s what this is about: Protecting religious freedom and protecting all \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ equally under the law. Join me in \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.”

**Possible conservative values to use to appeal to conservatives audiences by reminding of values**

This bedrock American principle of religious freedom is central to the political and legal convictions of Republicans, Democrats, liberals, and conservatives alike. The dream that became America began with the revolutionary concept expressed in the Declaration of Independence in words that are among the most noble and elegant ever written: “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.”

Americans who believe in the words of the Declaration of Independence, in Lincoln's Gettysburg Address, in the 14th Amendment, and in the Constitution's guarantees of equal protection and equal dignity before the law cannot sit by while this wrong continues. This is not a conservative or liberal issue; it is an American one, and it is time that we, as Americans, embraced it.

And there is nothing more basic, more fundamental, or even, quite frankly, more conservative, than guaranteeing each and every American an equal opportunity to work hard and support their families.

There is no good reason for any senator, Democrat or Republican, to oppose this bill. It’s the one thing that Democrats and Republicans across this state and across this country, actually agree on.

We should simply accept people for who they are as citizens, for being good human beings, and for enhancing our lives and doing their best. Isn’t that the American way? It is, of course. It’s profoundly American.

**Telling stories of American Muslims you know, in Op-eds, letters to editors, speeches, etc.:**

*Telling story of an American Muslim woman you know, who’s married with kids [remove language as appropriate for unmarried or no kids]*

Let me tell you about \_\_\_\_\_ who’s my \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. \_\_\_\_\_\_ is married and her wonderful husband, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, and she have \_\_\_\_\_ beautiful children. (If she’s not married/don’t have kids, mention their mom/dad and siblings). \_\_\_\_\_ is an American. She pays her taxes. She is a US citizen.  She is a registered voter. She is an American Muslim. She volunteer at \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (give specifics of where she volunteers) [Only if born in US: she was born in \_\_\_\_ (town), \_\_\_ (state)]. She grew up in \_\_\_\_\_\_ and her husband and she have made \_\_\_\_\_\_ her home since \_\_\_\_\_.

Growing up, her mom/dad always told her, “\_\_\_\_\_, you are going to do everything you can to make our society a better place. You must give back to society” and she remembers those words every day and has made it her mission to give back to society.  She really loved growing up in \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, going to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ High School, being part of the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ team and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

American Muslims share our country’s strong family values, dedicated to raising and educating their children.  American Muslims want to succeed in the traditional American way – by working hard and supporting their families. \_\_\_\_\_ and her husband and I work hard to put food on the table for their \_\_\_\_ kids. They love their kids and want to build a better future for them. They want them to grow up to be productive citizens, and proud Americans.  Muslims here are Americans in their hearts and in fact – most are born or raised as U.S. citizens.

As \_\_\_\_ entered professional life, her parents encouraged me to be an ambassador of her faith. They taught her to be humble and grateful for God’s blessings.  They taught her to have faith in God no matter the hardships in life.

[End with religious message (see ideas for messages in section above) and call to action]

*Telling story of an American Muslim man you know, who’s married with kids [remove language as appropriate for unmarried or no kids]*

Let me tell you about \_\_\_\_\_ who’s my \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. \_\_\_\_\_\_ is married and his wonderful wife, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, and he have \_\_\_\_\_ beautiful children.  (If he’s not married/don’t have kids, then mention their mom/dad and siblings). \_\_\_\_ is an American. He pays his taxes. He is a US citizen.  He is a registered voter. He is an American Muslim. He volunteers at \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (give specifics of where you volunteer).  [Only if born in US: I was born in \_\_\_\_ (town), \_\_\_ (state)].  He grew up in \_\_\_\_\_\_ and his wife and he have made \_\_\_\_\_\_ their home since \_\_\_\_\_.

Growing up, his mom/dad always told him, “\_\_\_\_\_, you are going to do everything you can to make our society a better place. You must give back to society” and he remember those words every day and has made it his mission to give back to society.  He really loved growing up in \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, going to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ High School, being part of the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_team and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

American Muslims share our country’s strong family values, dedicated to raising and educating their children.  American Muslims want to succeed in the traditional American way – by working hard and supporting their families. \_\_\_\_ and his wife work hard to put food on the table for their \_\_\_\_ kids. They love their kids and want to build a better future for them.  They want them to grow up to be productive citizens, and proud Americans. Muslims here are Americans in their hearts and in fact – most are born or raised as U.S. citizens.

As \_\_\_\_ entered professional life, his parents encouraged me to be an ambassador of his faith. They taught him to be humble and grateful for God’s blessings.  They taught him to have faith in God no matter the hardships in life.

[End with religious message (see ideas for messages in section above) and call to action]

*Telling story of an American Muslim youth you know*

Let me tell you about \_\_\_\_\_ who’s my \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. \_\_\_\_\_ is an American. She/he is a US citizen.  She/he is a registered voter. She/he is an American Muslim. She/he is volunteers at \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (give specifics of where She/he volunteers) [Only if born in US: I was born in \_\_\_\_ (town), \_\_\_ (state)].

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ grew up in \_\_\_\_ (city) and really enjoyed the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, going to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ High/Middle/Elementary School, being part of the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_team and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.   Her/his mom works at/as a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  and dad at/as a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_,  and growing up, I always saw them working hard to provide for \_\_\_\_\_\_’s brother/sister and her/him.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ remembers growing up her/his mom/dad always told me, “\_\_\_\_, you \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_[advice here] and you must give back to society” [advice here]. She/he remembers those words every day and has made it her/his mission to give back to society.

And this is why, inspired by Islam, \_\_\_\_\_ is studying \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ so that she/he can \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ [describe career in terms of its service to society]. She/he also volunteers at \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_ loves her/his family. Her/his mom and dad worked hard to put food on the table for their family. They still work hard to build a better future for \_\_\_ and her/his siblings. They’ve taught \_\_\_ and her/his siblings to grow up to be productive citizens, and proud Americans, and \_\_\_\_\_ works hard to make her/his parents proud.

[End with religious/conservative message (see ideas for messages in section above) and call to action]

Whenever candidates or media commentators talk about Islam and Muslims, they should first think about the effects of those words on the everyday lives of millions of American Muslim children, just like mine, growing up across our nation.  Anti-Muslim hate speech is not only dangerous in the hate crimes that it inspires against these children and their hard-working parents. It is also dangerous because it sends a dangerous message to millions of American Muslim kids like mine: that they are somehow less than equal and that the American Dream is not for them.  It can shatter their hopes for a better future, of a life fulfilled. The American Dream.

Millions of American Muslim children across our nation just like mine are now looking for fair-minded business and political leaders to be true champions by vocally and publicly stating at every opportunity that American Muslim children have the right to the same aspirations, hopes and dreams as every other young American.”

**Info about Seattle area Muslims** (use this if you’re in Seattle area)

There are about 100,000 American Muslims across our state, who give back to society every single day.  Muslims here are Americans in their hearts and in fact – most are born or raised as U.S. citizens.

Muslims here are Americans in their hearts and in fact – most are born or raised as U.S. citizens. Every day, thousands of American Muslim public school teachers like Sobia Sheikh at Cascade Middle School in Everett, and Nadiyah Samad at Tesla STEM High School are engaging and inspiring the next generation of Americans. Thousands of American Muslim firefighters like Ahmed Badran of King County Fire and Rescue and law enforcement officials like Seattle Police Department Sergeant Yanal Vwich and his wife, Seattle PD officer Elle Dani, are working every day to keep us all safe. Right here in JBLM, we have American Muslims such as USAF Captain Rashid Ghafoor serving honorably as active duty military personnel, and thousands more American Muslims like Benjamin Shabbaz are proud U.S. military veterans. Thousands of American Muslim nurses like Salimah Osman at Harborview are providing compassionate care. Thousands of American Muslims are business people, and in the many other roles building our nation’s vibrant economy. American Muslims are defined by their dedication to service to our nation and dedication to giving back to our society. These upstanding Spokane Muslims exemplify the best of America. Muslims here are Americans in their hearts and in fact – most are born or raised as U.S. citizens.

[Follow up with religious/conservative message (see ideas for messages in section above) and call to action]

**Info about Tri-City (in Central WA) area Muslims** (use this if you’re in Tri-City area)

There are about 100,000 American Muslims across our state, and about 5,000 in the Tri-City area who, inspired by their faith, give back to society every single day. Muslims here are Americans in their hearts and in fact – most are born or raised as U.S. citizens. More than 20 Tri-cities Muslim doctors and heart surgeons like [Dr. Fadi Alqaisi](http://www.kadlec.org/clinic/our-providers/fadi-alqaisi-md), [Iyad Jamali](http://www.kadlec.org/clinic/our-providers/iyad-jamali-md), and [Dr. Hannan Chaugle](http://www.kadlec.org/clinic/our-providers/hannan-chaugle-md), save lives every day with the surgeries they perform. Right here in Tri-Cities, we have Red Cross volunteers like [Zonia](http://www.tri-cityherald.com/2011/05/03/1475146/red-cross-volunteer-heads-south.html) [Ziada](http://www.tri-cityherald.com/2013/05/24/2407972/local-red-cross-volunteer-headed.html) who helped after Katrina, Oso and many other tragedies. [Public school teachers](http://www.tomatalk.com/news/2015/05/05/4735/) (and mosque youth group advisors) like [Sabiha Khan](http://kamiakin.ksd.org/School/About/Staff), girl scouts and boy scouts, social workers like Amira Alsalami, and many others who, inspired by their faith are giving back to society every day. Living the teachings of Islam, they serve God by serving humankind. Also, a cancer survivor and [Southridge High School](http://www.maxpreps.com/athlete/ahmed-colakovic/oY9iO8weEeS-8KA2nzwbTA/default.htm) sophomore [soccer player Ahmed Colakovic](http://www.mid-columbiaconference.com/images/docs/Southridge/rosters/Boys_Soccer.pdf) who overcame cancer just a few years ago.  There is a mosque in West Richland. I love going there and they love getting visitors of other faiths. There is also another mosque in Kennewick. American Muslims are defined by their dedication to service to our nation and dedication to giving back to our society. These upstanding Spokane Muslims exemplify the best of America. Muslims here are Americans in their hearts and in fact – most are born or raised as U.S. citizens.

[Follow up with religious message (see ideas for messages in section above) and call to action]

#### Info about Spokane-area Muslims (use this if you’re in Spokane area)

There are about 100,000 American Muslims across our state, and about 5,000 in the Spokane-area, who, inspired by their faith, give back to society every single day. Muslims here are Americans in their hearts and in fact – most are born or raised as U.S. citizens. Spokane area public school teachers like Mona Ali and Ishtiaq Quidwai are engaging and inspiring the next generation of Americans. Law enforcement officials like Assistant U.S. Attorney Aine Ahmed are working to keeping us all safe. Right here in Spokane County, we have active duty military personnel, U.S. military veterans like Eman Karns, nurses providing compassionate care, pharmacists like Eihab Ahmed, business people like Dina Mujanovic, and other American Muslims in the many other roles building our nation’s vibrant economy. American Muslims are defined by their dedication to service to our nation and dedication to giving back to our society. These upstanding Spokane Muslims exemplify the best of America. Muslims here are Americans in their hearts and in fact – most are born or raised as U.S. citizens.

[Follow up with religious/conservative message (see ideas for messages in section above) and call to action]

### **Responding to attacks on American Muslims**

If it’s a live interview where audience heard an attack or incorrect claim about what (esp. negative/false claims about) Islam teaches, start with, “No.” (If it’s not a live interview so the audience didn’t hear the question, then do not start with “No.”) and then: “Muslims believe that God favors the peaceful.” And then key message 3c and then keep going with how American Muslims you know practice Islamic teachings and how it contributes to society.

### **Talking about American Muslims you know and their volunteerism**

Islam teaches Muslims to take care of others and give back to society. Muslim parents teach their children the importance of giving back to society.  This is why American Muslims participate actively in mainstream society, as our co- workers, citizens and neighbors. American Muslims are part and parcel of American society and inspired by their faith, American Muslims give back every day as nurses, doctors, teachers, business people, and the many other roles building our nation’s vibrant economy.

[There are about 50,000 American Muslim medical doctors across the nation saving lives every day](http://www.ispu.org/pdfs/ISPU_Report_Muslim_Physicians_WEB.pdf). Hundreds of thousands of American Muslims nationwide are community volunteers who volunteer countless hours to make our nation a better place for everyone. Thousands of American Muslims are public school teachers inspiring, engaging and preparing the next generation of Americans. Thousands of American Muslims are nurses providing crucial health care.

### **Talking about Islam’s focus on education for both women and men**

American Muslim parents teach their kids Prophet Muhammad’s teaching that Muslims, both women and men, should pursue high levels of education. A 2009 Gallup Poll on American Muslims found that American Muslim women are the second most highly educated in the US, and are just as likely as American Muslim men to have a college degree or higher education.

### **National context of hate incidents**

[According to FBI statistics, anti-Muslim hate crimes nationwide are at very high levels](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2015/02/11/anti-muslim-hate-crimes-are-still-five-times-more-common-today-than-before-911/). Never before in the history of our nation, have reported anti-Muslim hate crimes been as high in number or in severity as in 2015. Throughout 2015, [CAIR](http://www.cair.com) offices nationwide received, on average, at least 1-2 daily reports of hate crimes targeting an American Muslim or someone perceived to be Muslim. Dozens of mosques were burned, numerous Americans who were Muslim or ‘looked Muslim’ were shot or beaten severely. During most of these attacks, attackers uttered or expressed the same anti-Muslim slurs repeated daily in mainstream headlines and often by candidates and politicians. And we have seen more than a dozen reported anti-Muslim hate attacks in the past 6 months or so right here in our state.

*[Note: When writing or speaking about hate crimes against American Muslims, never say or imply that the prevalence of hate crimes against Muslims is a result of violence committed by Muslims. Publicly stating something like, “hate crimes against Muslims have gone up since the Paris attacks” wrongly suggests that Muslims themselves are responsible for anti-Muslim hate crimes.]*

### **Some examples of anti-Muslim hate crimes in WA**

* In February 2015, a Muslim mother of two kids in the Spokane area, who in early February 2015, while walking to pick up her kids from the school bus stop after school, was attacked by a man who called her racial and religious slurs, threatened to beat and rape her, and tried to pull off her headscarf.
* [In February 2015, we saw a swastika and the words “Get Out” spray painted on a Hindu Temple](http://www.king5.com/story/news/local/2015/02/15/hindu-temple-cultural-center-bothell/23467073/) and [a swastika and the words “Muslims Get Out” spray painted on a junior high school in Bothell.](http://www.heraldnet.com/article/20150318/NEWS01/150319074)
* [About a week after this, a man in a pick-up truck drove through the Bothell temple’s parking lot screeching his tires and when people came outside to see what the noise was about, the man yelled at them, “N---gers, get out!” and drove away.](http://www.heraldnet.com/article/20150225/NEWS01/150229390)
* [Also in February 2015, windows at the Kent Hindu Temple were found smashed with very large bricks and rocks.](http://www.heraldnet.com/article/20150225/NEWS01/150229390)
* [On March 1, 2015, a Muslim single mother in SeaTac, WA was threatened by a man with a gun who said hateful things about Islam and Muslims](http://www.kirotv.com/videos/news/video-muslim-woman-in-sea-tac-says-stranger-pulled/vDLW8j/).
* On December 9, 2015, [an African American Christian ride-share driver in downtown Seattle](http://www.seattleglobalist.com/2015/12/15/attack-on-seattle-uber-driver-being-investigated-as-hate-crime/45502) was beaten by a man who called him ethnic and anti-Muslim slurs.
* On February 2, 2016: [a man armed with two guns and a baseball bat](http://www.seattletimes.com/news/armed-man-arrested-outside-northgate-mosque/), pointed a gun at people outside the Northgate mosque in Seattle and threatened to shoot them, after making comments about their ethnicity.
* In late March 2016: a 19-year-old American Muslim girl in Everett was wearing a head scarf and walking on the sidewalk when she was attacked and beaten by a grown man who yelled the same anti-Muslim slurs and conspiracy theories that we hear often, while he viciously beat her. She came home to her family with a bloody right cheek, bruised ribs, concussions, and damage to her head.
* (Find many more anti-Muslim hate crimes posted at [www.facebook.com/cairnational](http://www.facebook.com/cairnational)

As millions of American Muslims worry about our safety and future, and we also need elected officials to publicly affirm American values of religious freedom, and to join us in reminding our fellow Americans that while some may want to divide us, we are, and always will be, Americans, united as one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

## **Ethnically, religiously loaded news coverage or hate speech leading to hate crimes**

Never before in our nation’s history, have reported anti-Muslim hate crimes been as high in number or in severity as in 2015. Throughout 2015, [CAIR](http://www.cair.com) offices nationwide received, on average, at least one daily report of hate crimes targeting an American Muslim or someone perceived to be Muslim.

Too often, we have seen waves of religiously loaded news coverage of crimes and commentary when the suspect is Muslim, result in surges of anti-Muslim hate violence and bullying of Muslim children. [A study conducted by Media Tenor of primetime news 2007-2013](http://us.mediatenor.com/en/library/speeches/download/203_e7b0fd1fe879affa8739882f73c12e27) found that Islam is featured in primetime news more than any other religion, and the coverage is overwhelmingly negative.

Research shows that it’s the news coverage and commentary, not the event itself, that determines how the public will react and whether members of a minority group will face hate violence. Research by [University of Hawaii](https://web.archive.org/web/20150402113320/http:/www.hawaii.edu/hivandaids/Racism,_Ethnicity_and_Hate_Crime.pdf), [University of Exeter](http://r20.rs6.net/tn.jsp?f=001vjJD2ejTYtYELL_4TMMiRjuOgnM6NaKLndNGnk8qer7ybDSHySr7ws2S82jfDPtjqBMm88rPf6reJQLSM6Lu7JnPybokks8j4Tc61oSbE5lRRHvncpMqEf0Gwgj7biiYpnpAapk2YH4N024wimb3CVCPY1tgndBR34CrNAz36aiEd6ogRszKArFfwPx-pxTm2-mmnHzv-LPxkNtmw_XQGtoNiQFzO4ec&c=Rjq_ICiBorrgvqPf2LoJhhpgmVxmz5X-EE6BFV8V3ys4SlG7Xnh0Vg==&ch=1T3VioblBRlM61RHaHHXztzxjSa-tt39IlhkMvUsPIV6QlpaBVdbeA==) & [National Hispanic Media Coalition](http://r20.rs6.net/tn.jsp?f=001vjJD2ejTYtYELL_4TMMiRjuOgnM6NaKLndNGnk8qer7ybDSHySr7ws2S82jfDPtjwAn4P8Fnx86-_PSCqVzrMNxk5Yk9ZQeMEGNyTbNev6EzKEJ8nDNK07mXgGNFgvxir9uM1GHqQI1OTWgYGwLf0KgsQUvLGoPEySwPC9rF0VY3bIKl7IcWHQn95WW09v9jcrIetJfDniAmWhCqXtHyyyTRJcHmh1aVTqHyge1u-x7dYH7ZWRW0iqFU0G3gfZZjojX4S4s-14k=&c=Rjq_ICiBorrgvqPf2LoJhhpgmVxmz5X-EE6BFV8V3ys4SlG7Xnh0Vg==&ch=1T3VioblBRlM61RHaHHXztzxjSa-tt39IlhkMvUsPIV6QlpaBVdbeA==) indicate that media content can have a direct effect on hate and prejudice against minority groups. Accurate language can inform readers, while loaded language misleads readers and fuels hate and prejudice.

### **Hate speech leading to hate crimes**

Hate speech leads to hate crimes. When hate speech and conspiracy theories against an American minority are constantly spread publicly and go unchallenged, they foster an atmosphere that causes hate crimes. Never before in our nation’s history, have reported anti-Muslim hate crimes been as high in number or in severity as in 2015. Throughout 2015, [CAIR](http://www.cair.com) offices nationwide received, on average, at least one daily report of hate crimes targeting an American Muslim or someone perceived to be Muslim. Dozens of mosques were burned, numerous Americans who were Muslim or ‘looked Muslim’ were shot or beaten severely. During most of these attacks, attackers uttered or expressed the same anti-Muslim slurs repeated daily in mainstream headlines and often by candidates and politicians. And we have seen more than a dozen reported anti-Muslim hate attacks in the past 6 months or so right here in our state.

While no federal agency collects data on harassment and discrimination experienced by children based on their religion, according to [community-based surveys](https://www.ing.org/2011/10/03/ings-work-helps-to-prevent-bullying-of-muslim-studentsbbb-accreditation-93011/), 80% of American Muslim youth have reported being targets of taunts and harassment, oftentimes in front of teachers and school administrators.

When candidates or commentators talk about Islam or Muslims, they should think about the effects of their words on the everyday lives of millions of American Muslim children growing up across our nation. Anti-Muslim hate speech is not only dangerous in the hate crimes that it incites against these children and their parents. It is also dangerous because it sends a dangerous message to these children. It can shatter their hopes for a better future, of a life fulfilled. The American Dream.

**What we are hoping will happen (or to close your letter/speech)**

Will more fair-minded business and political leaders publicly and vocally affirm American values of religious freedom and inclusiveness and take every opportunity, when speaking to members of the general public, to speak about the lives and contributions of American Muslim families and children who they know?

Will more fair-minded business and political leaders take every opportunity to speak to the public about the lives and contributions of Muslim families and children whom they know, and publicly distance themselves and their values from those candidates, officials, and commentators who promote anti-Muslim prejudice?

Millions of American Muslim children are now looking to fair-minded business and political leaders stand up and speak vocally and publicly about our lives and contributions and be true champions for millions of American Muslim families and children, so that when they turn on the TV or open a newspaper, the messages they hear are that American Muslims’ lives and contributions are just as valuable, and they have the right to grow up with the same hopes and dreams any other young American.

**I am here to tell the millions of American Muslim children that they have the right to practice their faith and the right to have the same opportunities, hopes and dreams as every other young American. They too can have an equal chance to work hard and achieve the American Dream.**

**As countless American Muslim parents worry about their children’s safety and future, we will not sit back when people try to divide us across religious lines. We are all united as Americans. We are one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.**