



PUBLIC ADVOCATE FOR THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Letitia James

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Press Release

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In light of anti-Semitic and anti-Muslim incidents, Public Advocate Letitia James announces emergency task force to fight discrimination

According to NYPD, there has been a jump in crimes targeting Muslim and Jewish New Yorkers

(New York, NY) — Today, New York City Public Advocate Letitia James announced the creation of a taskforce to take on the rise in hate crimes against Jewish and Muslim New Yorkers. The taskforce, comprised of leaders from the Jewish, Muslim, and other faiths, will be aim to make short term and long-term policy recommendations to mitigate hate crimes in New York, with a focus on crimes that target the Jewish and Muslim communities.

“Our city belongs to all New Yorkers regardless of which religion they adhere to or whether they affiliate with any religion at all,” said **New York City Public Advocate Letitia James**. “We stand united in supporting every community in New York and creating a climate that fosters acceptance. The Public Advocate’s Task Force on Hate Crimes will examine and advance specific action items to address the rise in hate crimes against Muslim and Jewish New Yorkers. While divisive efforts like the controversial anti-Muslim ads may seek to tear us apart, New Yorkers will rise above and come together as we always do.”

Members of the task force represent a cross-section of New York City and have worked in various capacities to foster understand among the many communities that make up the mosaic of the city.

Members include: *Aisha Al-Adawiya, founder of Women in Islam; Chanina Sperlin, Executive Vice President Crown Heights Jewish Community Council; David Heskiel, Community Activist; David M. Pollock, Co-Director of the Jewish Community Relations Council of New York; Debbie Almontaser, Executive Director of the Muslim Consultative Network; Evan Bernstein, New York Regional Director for the Anti-Defamation League; Jacob Itzkowitz, NYPD Clergy Liason, Williamsburg Shomrim Safety Patrol; Imam Khalid Latif, Chaplain at NYPD and NYU; Michael Schmidt, Director of New York City Chapter of the American Jewish Committee; Sapreet Kaur, Executive Director of the Sikh Coalition; Shahana Masum, Bangladeshi American Advocacy Group/MUNA; Susie Lozada, Community Organizing and Political Director of Unite Here 100; Victor Kovner of the Brennan Center for Justice and Davis Wright Tremaine LLP.*

The task force will create a list of recommendations to address hate crimes affecting Jewish and Muslim communities throughout New York City.

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