



# Under Suspicion, Under Attack

Xenophobic Political Rhetoric and Hate Violence against  
South Asian, Muslim, Sikh, Hindu, Middle Eastern, and  
Arab Communities in the United States

## **About South Asian Americans Leading Together (SAALT)**

South Asian Americans Leading Together (SAALT) is a national nonpartisan non-profit organization that elevates the voices and perspectives of South Asian individuals and organizations to build a more just and inclusive society in the United States. SAALT's strategies include conducting public policy analysis and advocacy; building partnerships with South Asian organizations and allies; mobilizing communities to take action; and developing leadership for social change. SAALT is the coordinating entity for the National Coalition of South Asian Organizations (NCSO).

## **Acknowledgements**

This report was written by Sameera Hafiz and Suman Raghunathan in consultation with Deepa Iyer. Many thanks to Victoria Meaney for her research which serves as the basis for this report's analysis and to Christina Modi for her research and editing support. We would also like to thank former Policy Director Manar Waheed for her assistance with this report.

The authors would like to acknowledge the individuals, communities, and institutions that continue the fight each and every day to expose xenophobia and protect our communities from hate violence. Thank you for your work toward achieving a climate free of hostility and discrimination in our country.

Finally we would like to thank the Ford Foundation, Four Freedoms Fund, W.K. Kellogg Foundation, Open Society Foundations, and Proteus Fund for their generous support.

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2014



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# Executive Summary

Four years have passed since South Asian Americans Leading Together (SAALT) published its report, *From Macacas to Turban Toppers: The Rise in Xenophobia and Racist Rhetoric in American Political Discourse* in October 2010, yet South Asian, Muslim, Sikh, Hindu, Middle Eastern, and Arab communities continue to live in a climate of growing hostility. Emerging revelations demonstrate the extent to which our communities are cast as suspicious by multiple levels of government and law enforcement without cause or accountability. South Asian, Muslim, Sikh, Hindu, Middle Eastern, and Arab communities are increasingly subject to xenophobic rhetoric from political figures and government officials, which are then highlighted by the media and filtered through society. Our communities continue to face hate violence at an unacceptable frequency, forcing us to heal over and over again while living in a climate of increasing fear.

In this report, SAALT collected data from January 2011 through April 2014 on two elements that characterize the hostile climate faced by our communities: xenophobic rhetoric by political figures and hate violence. Our current findings show that xenophobic political rhetoric has become more frequent, more insidious, and more likely to be featured on a national platform, relative to our 2010 report. Simultaneously, hate violence against our communities has expanded in volume as well as intensity. While our previous report did not track incidents of hate violence, our research and reports from communities appear to indicate a surge in such incidents over the past 13

years. We collected almost 160 examples of xenophobic rhetoric and hate violence targeting our communities during this time period. Yet as hostility increases toward our communities, the population of South Asians and other communities of color in the United States is also growing: America is projected to no longer be majority white in less than 30 years.<sup>1</sup> The impact of these attacks on our communities is manifold and threatens the safety and freedom of all in the U.S.

Amid the growing hostility facing our communities throughout the nation, South Asian, Muslim, Sikh, Hindu, Middle Eastern, and Arab communities and

**Xenophobic political speech targeting our communities is more numerous, more insidious, and is more likely to be heard on a national platform. An overwhelming majority of the xenophobic political comments—over 90%—were motivated by anti-Muslim sentiment.**

allies have stood together to protect religious freedoms and to support American ideals of equality and justice. This report examines incidents of xenophobic rhetoric by political figures and hate violence nationwide as well as best practices in messaging, policy advocacy, and community engagement to address these attacks and shift our society toward the freedom and safety to which we are all entitled.

This report also includes recommendations for the President and Congress, as these government leaders and entities can use their executive and legislative positions to set the tone for appropriate political discourse and create policies and programs that address hate violence targeting our communities. Recommendations for community members, leaders, and allies are also included so we can all respond to the impact of a hostile climate on our communities and begin to move the narrative toward a better tomorrow.

## Key Findings

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SAALT researched and documented xenophobic rhetoric by political figures and hate violence directed at our communities from January 2011 through April 2014. During this period, SAALT documented 78 instances of xenophobic political speech and 76 examples of hate violence. Our analysis of these 157 incidents establishes the following key findings:

- **The Overall Climate:** The climate faced by South Asian, Muslim, Sikh, Hindu, Middle Eastern, and Arab communities has become increasingly hostile in the four years since SAALT published *From Macacas to Turban Toppers: The Rise in Xenophobic and Racist Rhetoric in American Political Discourse*. This climate is characterized by profiling and surveillance by law enforcement agencies, the growth of an Islamophobia “industry” that demonizes Muslims via the Internet and media, xenophobic political speech, and hate violence, among other elements.
- **Xenophobic Rhetoric in Political Discourse:** The 78 examples of xenophobic rhetoric by political figures documented over a three-year period in

## Over 80% of the instances of hate violence documented for this report were motivated by anti-Muslim sentiment. Attacks on other faith communities often also involved severe violence.

this report underline such rhetoric has become more prevalent since SAALT’s previous report on the issue was published in October 2010. Our 2010 analysis tracked 76 examples over a four-year period. Although both reports documented nearly the same number of incidents, the incidents in this report occurred over a three-year period versus the four-year period covered in the 2010 analysis. SAALT tracked an average of nearly 40% more examples of xenophobic political rhetoric since our previous report. It is clear the political speech targeting our communities is more numerous, more insidious, and is more likely to be heard on a national platform. An overwhelming majority of the xenophobic political comments—over 90%—were motivated by anti-Muslim sentiment.

- **Hate Violence:** The 76 hate violence incidents we documented demonstrate the high level of hostility our communities face. While our previous report did not track incidents of hate violence, our research indicates a surge in hate violence over the past 13 years. The Department of Justice (DOJ) reports that incidents of hate violence against our communities surged after 9/11 and have remained high with little variation.<sup>2</sup> Over 80% of the instances of hate violence documented for this report were motivated by anti-Muslim sentiment. Attacks on other faith communities often also involved severe violence.
- **Impact on Our Communities:** This hostile climate has a lasting impact on individuals living in our communities. Many in our communities are

being deprived of their First Amendment rights to freedom of religion, speech, and association.

- **Threat to the Very Fabric of Our Country:** Xenophobic rhetoric, hate violence, and other factors that contribute to a hostile climate experienced by members of our communities run contrary to the values of our nation and serve as a chilling reminder that the American principles of freedom and equality remain a dream for many within the U.S. This growing hostility is especially alarming given the shifting racial and demographic fabric of the U.S. and the fact that the South Asian population represents the fastest-growing major ethnic group in the U.S.<sup>3</sup>
- **Better Practices in Messaging, Policy Advocacy, and Community Mobilization:** Despite the overwhelming incidents of xenophobic rhetoric and hate violence, there are also numerous examples of “better practices” from government and community leaders, organizations, and media who played an essential role to shift the narrative in the aftermath of the Boston Marathon Bombing to allow for an effective investigation and reduce backlash. In the wake of the Oak Creek tragedy, policy advocacy organizations came together and successfully requested a Senate hearing on hate crimes and a system to track hate crimes against Hindus, Sikhs, and Arabs. Advocacy organizations worked across lines of race, ethnicity, and religion in New York City to raise national awareness on local surveillance, spur legislative and political change, and develop an effective social media campaign to impact discriminatory policing.

## Recommendations

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### Recommendations for the President:

- Ensure that all political speech emanating from the Administration upholds American values of fairness and equality; swiftly and strongly condemn xenophobic and hateful rhetoric by other political figures.

**There are also numerous examples of “better practices” from government and community leaders, organizations, and media who played an essential role to shift the narrative in the aftermath of the Boston Marathon Bombing to allow for an effective investigation and reduce backlash.**

- Create a National Task Force to Prevent Hate Violence focused on addressing incidents directed at South Asian, Muslim, Sikh, Hindu, Middle Eastern, and Arab communities. This task force would leverage a holistic approach and develop relationships between communities and government to address hate violence by creating comprehensive and coordinated preventive measures and response protocols at the federal, state, and local levels.
- Rigorously enforce hate crimes legislation and ensure that law enforcement receive cultural and religious competency trainings to understand the challenges our communities face when reporting hate violence.
- Revise the Department of Justice 2003 Guidance on the Use of Race by Federal Law Enforcement. Critical changes would include prohibiting profiling based on categories of national origin and religion; removing the national security and border integrity loopholes; ensuring the application of the Guidance to state and local law enforcement agencies; prohibiting surveillance activities and

data collection; and create enforceability and compliance mechanisms.

- End suspicionless and discriminatory surveillance of our communities by law enforcement agencies; investigate state and local law enforcement for discriminatory practices and the use of biased and discriminatory trainings; and proactively issue statements condemning these practices.

## Recommendations for Congress:

- Insist that all political speech emanating from members of Congress upholds American values of fairness and equality; swiftly and strongly condemn xenophobic and hateful rhetoric by other political figures.
- Pass the End Racial Profiling Act (ERPA) to end law enforcement profiling on the basis of race, religion, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, and national origin.
- Conduct congressional hearings to investigate the discriminatory and suspicionless surveillance of our communities by all levels of law enforcement.

## Recommendations to Community Members, Leaders, and Allies:

- Educate communities about their rights; encourage reporting of hate violence; and foster healing in our communities in the aftermath of incidents of hate violence.
- Voice opposition to political figures engaging in xenophobic rhetoric and support those who promote equality and freedom for all.
- Promote messaging that supports and welcomes our communities; work collaboratively to advance our communities' policy agenda; build collaborative relationships across sectors to address the hostile climate facing our communities.
- Continue building meaningful relationships with local and national media to enhance critical reporting of xenophobic rhetoric and hate incidents. Amplify media outlets that expose xenophobic political rhetoric and shed light on the climate facing our communities.

# Introduction

Thirteen years have passed since the tragic loss of innocent lives during the 9/11 terrorist attacks. Like all Americans, South Asian, Muslim, Sikh, Hindu, Middle Eastern, and Arab communities were traumatized by the horrors that our country experienced that day. Unfortunately, our communities continue to face an added and distinct reality—the continued impact of the 9/11 attacks on our ability to live freely without discrimination and fear. Though we have moved well into the next decade following the 9/11 terrorist attacks, our communities continue to face hostility, fear, threats, and physical violence largely attributable to this tragedy.<sup>4</sup> In 2001, 59% of Americans held favorable opinions of Muslims.<sup>5</sup> In 2012, half of Americans reported discomfort with women in burqas, mosques in their neighborhoods, or Muslims praying in airports.<sup>6</sup> This dynamic of hostility and fear curtails our communities' ability to enjoy First Amendment freedoms such as speech, religion, and association, takes a toll on the psyches of individuals within our communities, and threatens the safety of communities and the very fabric of our nation as a whole.

In October 2010, SAALT published *From Macacas to Turban Toppers: The Rise in Xenophobic and Racist Rhetoric in American Political Discourse*. The report catalogued xenophobic comments directed at South Asian, Muslim, Sikh, Hindu, Middle Eastern, and Arab community members as well as political candidates of South Asian descent. Our 2010 report documented 76 instances of xenophobic rhetoric over a four-year period. Our current analysis documents a slightly higher

**In 2012, half of Americans reported discomfort with women in burqas, mosques in their neighborhoods, or Muslims praying in airports.**



Source: *New York Daily News*

number—78—of instances of xenophobic directed at our communities over a shorter period of three years, representing an average annual increase of nearly 40%.

This increase is a clear indicator that the climate in which our communities live has become increasingly hostile. In addition, South Asian, Muslim, Sikh, Hindu, Middle Eastern, and Arab communities remain the targets of discriminatory government policies such as profiling and surveillance by law enforcement agencies at multiple levels, including the National Security Administration (NSA), the Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI), and local agencies such as the New York Police Department (NYPD). As these government policies instill fear in the general public and cast our communities as dangerous and suspect, political figures are simultaneously espousing xenophobic

and bigoted rhetoric. In fact, in the four years since SAALT's last report, not only has this rhetoric become more prevalent, it has also become increasingly prevalent on national political and media platforms. The proliferation of xenophobia in political discourse is highlighted by the statements and actions of elected officials and candidates, such as Congressman Peter King's March 2011 congressional hearings, which boldly claimed that Muslim communities warranted suspicion and special scrutiny. Additional examples include the rhetoric surrounding President Barack Obama's reelection in 2012 questioning whether he was Muslim, the growth of the anti-Sharia movement over the last decade, and the hostility surrounding the immigration reform debate.

In addition to a climate rife with profiling, surveillance, and xenophobic political speech, our communities and institutions are increasingly the targets of hate violence. The surge in hate violence aimed at South Asian, Muslim, Sikh, Hindu, Middle Eastern, and Arab communities was most glaringly exemplified by the 2012 tragic shooting in Oak Creek, Wisconsin, which resulted in the death of six congregants at a Sikh gurdwara. Community members, spaces, and institutions continue to be targeted and attacked, sending a message that we are neither welcome nor safe in even our most sacred spaces.

As the hostile climate toward our communities has proliferated over the past four years, the demographics of our country are shifting rapidly, with significant increases in the nation's Latino, Asian-American, and South Asian communities in recent decades. South Asian Americans are the fastest-growing major ethnic group in the U.S. and have emerged in new areas around the country.<sup>7</sup> According to 2010 Census data, over 3.4 million South Asians live in the U.S.<sup>8</sup> The South Asian community grew 81% from 2000 to 2010, far surpassing the roughly 43% growth in both the Latino and Asian American populations.<sup>9</sup> The five states with the largest South Asian populations at that time were California, New York, New Jersey, Texas, and Illinois.<sup>10</sup> The South Asian population has also significantly increased in less racially-diverse regions of the U.S. such as Charlotte, North Carolina, where it increased 187% from 2000 to 2010.<sup>11</sup> Beyond the South Asian population, communities of color in the U.S. continue to grow at a rapid pace—demographers predict the U.S. will no longer have a majority of white

## **The rapid growth of the South Asian population and communities of color as a whole is challenging and expanding perceptions about who and what is American, who is afforded the rights and protections of our laws, and which institutions make up the fabric of our country.**

residents by 2043.<sup>12</sup> The rapid growth of the South Asian population and communities of color as a whole is challenging and expanding perceptions about who and what is American, who is afforded the rights and protections of our laws, and which institutions make up the fabric of our country.

This report examines two factors that contribute to the increasingly hostile climate faced by our communities: xenophobic rhetoric by political figures and hate violence. This report will present a detailed discussion of trends in xenophobic rhetoric targeting individuals, communities, and religious institutions. It will also outline the increasing volume and severity of hate violence aimed at our communities through the targeting of individuals, religious institutions, and community spaces. Finally, for each of these issues, this analysis will highlight some better practices to respond to xenophobia and hate in our society and bring us closer to the principles of freedom and equality upon which our nation was founded.

# Definitions, Methodology and Limitations

Throughout this report, we use the term “our communities” to signify South Asian, Muslim, Sikh, Hindu, Middle Eastern, and Arab communities. Our communities, though diverse, are often categorized as one—both in the discourse that has evolved in the aftermath of 9/11 and the discriminatory tone behind many of the xenophobic comments and incidents of hate violence discussed in this report.

Xenophobic rhetoric is defined in our report as political comments motivated by a fear or hatred of those perceived to be different or “foreign.” We limit the study of such rhetoric in this report to comments made by political figures from January 2011 through April 2014. Political figures include candidates, elected officials, and government representatives at the state, federal, and local level.

We use the term hate violence to denote crimes such as murder, arson, assault, harassment, and vandalism that have an added element of bias toward our communities. Many of the incidents described in this report fall within the legal definition of hate crimes. We use the broader term hate violence in this analysis to include attacks that may not technically qualify as hate crimes but appear to originate from hate or malice and instill fear and threaten safety and freedom—for example, throwing pig legs at a mosque.<sup>13</sup> As with xenophobic rhetoric, this report focuses on hate violence incidents that occurred from January 2011 through April 2014.

SAALT tracked the xenophobic rhetoric and hate violence incidents described in this report through a variety of methods, including Internet news searches,

action alerts and announcements by ally organizations, community members, and media watchdog entities from January 2011 through April 2014. Based on this research, SAALT documented 78 instances of xenophobic rhetoric by political figures (see Appendix B) and 76 incidents of hate violence (see Appendix A). While our research is a representative sample of xenophobic rhetoric throughout the country, we recognize it is impossible to present a comprehensive account of all the comments made by political figures targeting our communities within the report due to the limitations of our research methodology. This is especially true for political comments made outside of the national context. SAALT recognizes its limited capacity to capture the impact of hateful rhetoric made by many politicians at the local level.

Additionally, due to severe underreporting of hate violence, the examples of hate incidents cited in this analysis should not be viewed as a comprehensive account of all hate violence targeting our communities in the specified time period. In response, we have focused on compiling a comprehensive list of incidents reported by the media or civil rights organizations.

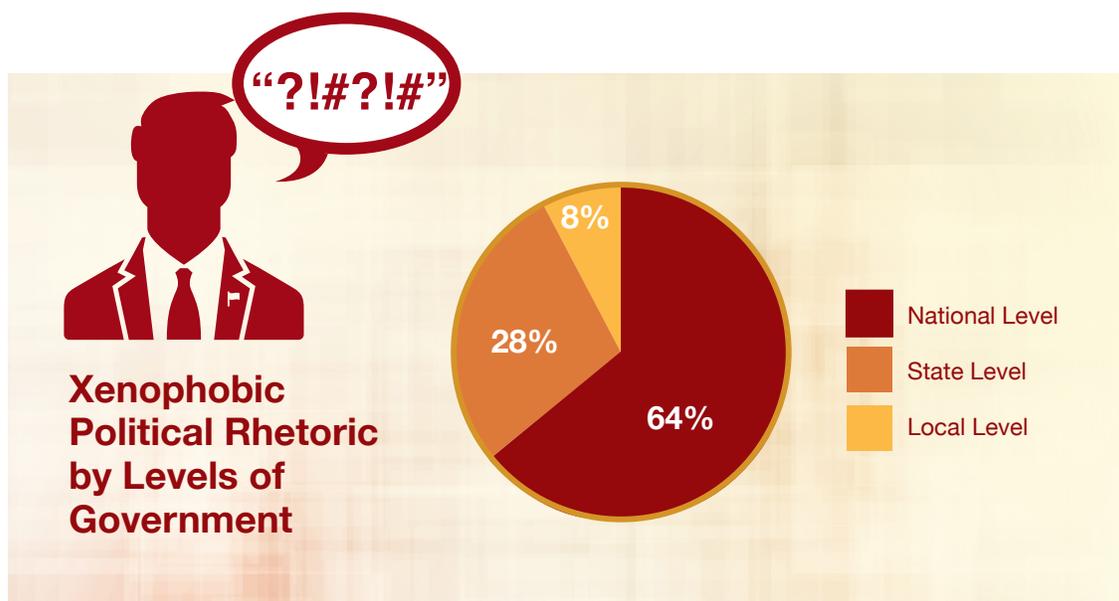
Finally, this report compares the current climate facing our communities to the 2010 landscape assessed in SAALT’s previous report, *From Macacas to Turban Toppers*, by examining xenophobic rhetoric and hate violence. Notably, our previous report examined xenophobic rhetoric through a slightly different lens and did not include an examination of hate violence. As a result, some of the comparisons between our 2010 and 2014 analyses are not symmetrical.

# Findings

The xenophobic rhetoric and hate violence incidents captured in this report are similar in many ways. They cast our communities as disloyal, suspect, and un-American, they create fear and community distrust of government, and finally threaten the rights and safety of all Americans. Our findings outline how hostility toward our communities has increased, xenophobic rhetoric has become more prevalent, and hate violence has become more severe and insidious. These attacks target South Asian, Muslim, Sikh, Hindu, Middle Eastern, and Arab communities, but the overwhelming majority of the attacks documented reflect a climate rife with pervasive anti-Muslim sentiment. In addition to highlighting these trends, this section will highlight better practices to counter such incidents through messaging, policy advocacy, and community mobilization.

## Xenophobic Rhetoric by Political Figures: Casting Our Communities as Disloyal, Suspect, and Un-American

Xenophobic rhetoric appears to pervade every level of political discourse from the presidential arena to members of Congress to state and local government. Rhetoric around President Obama's reelection, congressional hearings targeting the Muslim community, and the immigration reform debate<sup>14</sup> showcased the hateful and xenophobic comments our elected officials and political candidates made in public.



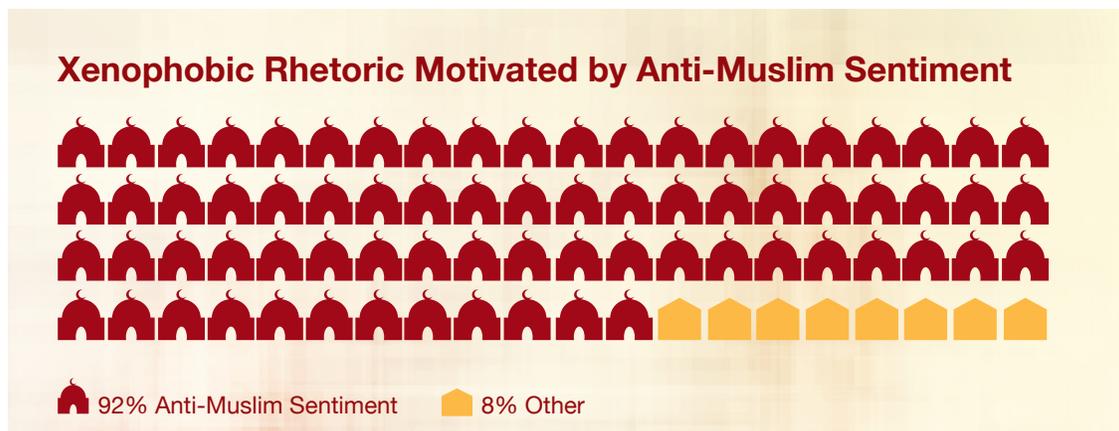
For example, during the 2012 presidential campaign, many of President Obama's opponents implied he was Muslim with the well-known subtext that he was therefore inherently dangerous and disloyal to the U.S. This troubling conflation was not limited to political campaigns—it was echoed in the halls of Congress. Congressman Peter King used his platform as the Chair of the House Homeland Security Committee to hold congressional hearings in March 2011 that cast suspicion on Muslim communities.

When combined, these incidents reveal that xenophobic rhetoric has significantly intensified since SAALT's 2010 report, which outlined 76 instances of xenophobic rhetoric over a four-year period. The current analysis documented a nearly 40% average annual increase in xenophobic political statements, with 78 instances over approximately three years. Not only are there more instances of hateful comments, but they have grown more sinister and are increasingly part of the national political discourse. Of the nearly 80 examples of xenophobic political speech SAALT documented, a large majority occurred on a national level: 64% on a national platform, 28% were related to state-level political figures, and 8% were related to local politics.

The reality that xenophobic rhetoric is more numerous, insidious, and amplified via national platforms is deeply troubling given the role public figures—our leaders—have with respect to shaping public perceptions and the power they have to access echo chambers, reframe messaging, and shift the narrative.

An overwhelming majority of the xenophobic political statements we catalogued—72 out of 78, or 92%—were motivated by anti-Muslim sentiment. This startlingly high rate of anti-Muslim rhetoric impacts all our communities—South Asian, Muslim, Sikh, Hindu, Middle Eastern, and Arab. Moreover, political leaders vilifying one religion defies fundamental American values of religious tolerance and equality. This dynamic threatens the ideals upon which our country was founded and impacts all communities in the U.S.

The xenophobic rhetoric we documented fell into three main categories: statements directed at individuals, targeting our communities, and threatening our religious freedom. One thread remains throughout these categories: the perception of our community members as disloyal, suspect, and un-American.



### Targeting Individuals as Disloyal

The xenophobic rhetoric we documented paints individuals from our communities as disloyal simply by virtue of their perceived religion, ethnicity, or national origin. Many comments went beyond questioning community members' loyalty to explicitly conflate Islam with terrorism and the destruction of the U.S. and advance the perception that all Muslims are therefore a threat to our national security. The insistence by

many during the 2012 presidential campaign that President Obama is Muslim serves as one prominent, national example of these problematic assumptions about loyalty and suspicion. The underlying subtext to this misconception is the idea that President Obama is Muslim and is therefore disloyal to his country and a danger to our nation. Moreover, the comments made on a national stage about a sitting president suggest a troubling acceptance of political xenophobia in our country.

Statements defaming Obama and according him significantly less respect than other presidents were commonplace during the months leading up to his reelection in 2012. For example, during a campaign event for presidential candidate Rick Santorum in January 2012, a supporter publicly said to Santorum about Obama, “He is an avowed Muslim. Why isn’t something being done to get him out of the government. He has no legal right to be calling himself president.”<sup>15</sup> Santorum responded, “I’m doing my best to try to get him out of the government.”<sup>16</sup> Rather than seizing the opportunity to correct hateful speech at his campaign event, Santorum’s statement bolstered the perception that Obama was Muslim and therefore disloyal.

Presidential candidate Newt Gingrich stated in March 2012 that he took Obama at his word with regard to his Christian faith. Unfortunately, Gingrich continued, “The fact is I take him at his word but I think it is very bizarre that he is desperately concerned to apologize to Muslim religious fanatics while they are killing young Americans.”<sup>17</sup> These comments and others like it dangerously suggest that Obama has an affinity for Muslims, which in turn implies his support for terrorism. Notably, former President George W. Bush made significantly more statements disassociating Islam from terrorism than Obama and faced little public criticism.<sup>18</sup>

During her time in Congress, Congresswoman Michele Bachmann (R-MN) stated, “If you just objectively look at every action that Barack Obama has taken as president of the United States, the fruit of his actions have lifted up the aims and goals of the Muslim Brotherhood and Islamic jihad, and his actions have taken down Israel.”<sup>19</sup> These comments reveal a deeply-held belief that a Muslim could not possibly be loyal to the US.

The xenophobic rhetoric faced by Congressman Keith Ellison (D-MN) was particularly overt and hateful, likely because he is the first Muslim-American elected to Congress. Lynne Torgerson, a candidate who challenged Ellison for his congressional seat three times, repeatedly called him a “radical Islamist” and incorrectly declared Islam was neither recognizable nor fully protected by the First Amendment.<sup>20</sup> Such statements, amplified by a congressional candidate, send an unfortunate message that the fundamental American

## Herman Cain and Loyalty Hurdles for Muslims

In a television interview, Presidential Candidate Herman Cain stated Muslims would have to prove their loyalty to the Constitution before he would consider them for Cabinet positions, but he would not require such proof for people of other faiths, like Catholicism or Mormonism, because **“there is a greater dangerous part of the Muslim faith than there is in any of these other religions.”**

Scott Keyes, *Herman Cain Would Require Muslim Appointees to Take a Special Loyalty Oath*, ThinkProgress (Jun. 8, 2011), <http://thinkprogress.org/politics/2011/06/08/240415/herman-cain-require-muslim-appointees-loyalty-oath/>.

principle of freedom of religion should be restricted to certain faith groups. This convoluted notion not only limits the rights of members of our communities, but also cuts at the heart of the very freedoms the U.S. holds dear.

Former Congressman Allen West (R-FL) made statements that discredited Ellison as a Muslim when he referred to Ellison as “the antithesis of the principles upon which the country was established.”<sup>21</sup> Such comments made by one Congressman about another—without outcry from political leaders regarding the bias and xenophobia they voice—imply Muslims are disloyal to the U.S. and should not serve in political office. These statements fuel a growing acceptance of discriminatory discourse in our society.

Political candidates of South Asian origin were also targets of xenophobic rhetoric portraying them as disloyal, suspicious, and unworthy of election. In a state Senate race in Pennsylvania, candidate Mark Mustio superimposed an image of the Indian flag behind a

**“If you just objectively look at every action that Barack Obama has taken as president of the United States, the fruit of his actions have lifted up the aims and goals of the Muslim Brotherhood and Islamic jihad, and his actions have taken down Israel.”**

-Congresswoman Michele Bachmann

photograph of his South Asian opponent, D. Raja, and used the slogan, “Mark Mustio: He’s one of us, not a politician.” By using this messaging, Mustio questioned Raja’s loyalty and expressed anti-immigrant sentiment. It appears Mustio sought to imply he was a better candidate because Raja, while a U.S. citizen, is originally from India and therefore not American. In response, the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* dropped its endorsement of Mustio, referring to his tactics as “insidious” and “stooping to racism to get elected.”<sup>22</sup> Media outlets like the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* should be lauded for decrying un-American and hateful speech emanating from political candidates.

## **Casting Suspicion on Communities**

Nearly half of the instances of xenophobic rhetoric recorded by SAALT were aimed at entire ethnic or religious communities, marking them as suspect. The upswing in such statements is underlined by the first-ever congressional hearings to scrutinize Muslim communities in the U.S. Convened by Congressman Peter King (R-NY) in his capacity as chair of the House Committee on Homeland Security in March 2011, these hearings fueled the hostile climate faced by

our communities and represented the failure of many public leaders to rise above hate and fear. Nevertheless, many leaders expressed fears that the discriminatory nature of these hearings might threaten the safety of our communities. For example, Congressman Bennie Thompson (D-MS) expressed concern that King’s hearings would result in a spike in hate crimes or religious profiling aimed at our communities.<sup>23</sup>

Unfortunately, numerous political figures other than King cast suspicion upon our communities. One of the most notable xenophobic remarks came from former Congressman Joe Walsh (R-IL) who opined on MSNBC in April 2014, “We’re at war . . . we need to begin profiling who our enemy is in this war: young Muslim men.”<sup>24</sup> He went on to disavow immigration legislation that bans profiling, saying, “We need to profile, even when it comes to our immigration policy.”<sup>25</sup> These comments demonstrated not only a willingness to cast suspicion upon entire communities of people living in the U.S. who are Muslim or perceived as such,<sup>26</sup> but also a lack of understanding of civil rights protections for all Americans and the ways profiling is not only ineffective but also destroys relationships between communities and government, making us all less safe.

Political figures from the South were often the most outspoken and frequent with xenophobic rhetoric vilifying our communities. Comments from leaders in Florida, Georgia, and Texas were particularly hostile and overt. In June 2013, Former Congressman Allen West claimed the Quran instructs Muslims “to carry out attacks against Americans and innocent people,”<sup>27</sup> perpetuating negative stereotypes about Islam and Muslims. During the 2012 presidential campaign, Newt Gingrich drew offensive comparisons between Muslims and Nazis,<sup>28</sup> and Herman Cain shared his view that most Muslims are extremists.<sup>29</sup> Though both of these politicians hail from the South, they voiced xenophobic rhetoric on a national platform—advancing the flawed perception across the nation that all Muslims are violent extremists.

An especially troubling incident occurred in February 2011 outside a California fundraiser to end homelessness and domestic violence organized by the Islamic Circle of North American Relief USA (ICNA). Deborah Pauly, a local councilwoman and vice chair of the Orange County Republican Party, stated at a

## Xenophobia and Immigration Reform

The combined effect of 9/11-related backlash and fears about the changing demographics in the U.S. have led to xenophobic rhetoric aimed at comprehensive immigration reform. For example, Congressman Lou Barletta stated in April 2014, “You know, sometimes we need to remind everyone about September 11th. The pilots of those planes, it was an act of love to a different God that took American lives. And not everyone who is here illegally is all here for an act of love for their families.” Congressman Barletta previously spearheaded the passage of a 2006 ordinance punishing landlords who rent to undocumented immigrants while mayor of Hazleton, Pennsylvania. Former Congressman Joe Walsh made similar anti-Muslim comments in his objections to the passage of immigration reform legislation in the Senate in 2013 when he called for the profiling of young Muslim men, saying we should “take a pause” on immigration reform.

Miranda Blue, *Rep. Lou Barletta Says There's 'Nothing More Dangerous' Than Immigration Reform, Ties it to 9/11*, Right Wing Watch (Apr. 10, 2014), <http://www.rightwingwatch.org/content/rep-lou-barletta-says-theres-nothing-more-dangerous-immigration-reform-ties-it-911>; *Fmr. Rep. Joe Walsh: We Need To Profile "Our Enemy": Young Muslim Men*, Real Clear Politics (Apr. 22, 2013), [http://www.realclearpolitics.com/video/2013/04/22/fmr\\_rep\\_joe\\_walsh\\_we\\_need\\_to\\_profile\\_our\\_enemy\\_young\\_muslim\\_men.html](http://www.realclearpolitics.com/video/2013/04/22/fmr_rep_joe_walsh_we_need_to_profile_our_enemy_young_muslim_men.html).

protest outside the event, “I know quite a few Marines who would be very happy to help these terrorists to an early meeting in paradise.”<sup>30</sup> Pauly’s comments, thinly veiled threats to Muslims participating in the event, were made as protesters shouted “Terrorists!” at children entering the fundraiser with their families.<sup>31</sup> This type of vitriol, which casts suspicion and hate on entire communities, fosters the belief that it is acceptable for the government and the public to trample on the rights and dignity of our communities. It sends a message that these communities and even their children are not Americans or even human. An elected official voicing threats against entire communities is particularly egregious, as it can be interpreted as implicit government approval to menace individuals and commit acts of hate violence against entire communities.

## Using Religious Institutions to Create a Perception of Un-American Treachery

SAALT tracked approximately 25 incidents of xenophobic rhetoric directed at institutions associated with our communities, roughly one-third of the total number of comments tracked. Most of these comments were aimed at targeting Sharia law or blocking the construction of mosques. Though much of the xenophobic rhetoric targeted at institutions focused on Islam, community members of various faiths were also subjected to hateful comments by political figures. For example, Kentucky State Senator David Williams criticized the Kentucky Governor’s participation in a Hindu groundbreaking prayer for a new manufacturing plant. Williams stated the Governor was worshipping “false gods” and suggested that all Hindus should open their eyes and find Jesus Christ.<sup>32</sup> This rhetoric isolates Islam, Hinduism, and any faith associated with our communities as un-American while steadfastly refusing to embrace the diverse faiths and ethnicities across the U.S.

The desire to isolate religions perceived as associated with our communities is clearly illustrated by the effort to rally states to adopt anti-Sharia legislation. The anti-Sharia movement began amassing supporters among conservative leaders early in this decade and has reportedly been based upon anti-Muslim “bigotry

**“If we look at the philosophical underpinnings of what is called Islam . . . of that culture of Islam—those are very serious problems and they are antithetical to the American way . . . mosques are not churches like we would think of churches.”**

-Colorado State Senator Kevin Grantham

plain and simple.”<sup>33</sup> Anti-Sharia laws target “a problem more imagined than real,”<sup>34</sup> fomenting anxiety that Muslims are plotting to take over the U.S. legal system in favor of an alternate one based on Islam. Sharia law, like other religious or customary law, is most frequently used in the U.S. to settle disputes involving family or commercial law, such as tort claims against businesses in Muslim countries.<sup>35</sup> The anti-Sharia movement, which began by targeting Islam, changed course over the last few years because of its failure to pass Constitutional muster.<sup>36</sup> The movement has now shifted its rhetoric from explicitly targeting Muslim communities alone to calling for what appear to be more neutral foreign law bans.<sup>37</sup>

Beginning in 2010, lawmakers in at least 32 states introduced bills to limit the ability of state courts to consider foreign or religious laws.<sup>38</sup> As of April 2014, seven states had enacted bans on foreign laws that are proxies for anti-Sharia laws: Arizona, Kansas, Louisiana, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Dakota, and Tennessee.<sup>39</sup> These efforts to target Sharia law institutionalize the presumption that Islam and those associated with it are un-American.<sup>40</sup>

To further this agenda, some political figures combined tenets of the anti-Sharia movement with xenophobic

rhetoric targeting Islam to perpetuate the idea that Muslims pose a threat to our nation on every level. For example, former Congressman Allen West (R-FL) called Islam “a very vile and very vicious enemy that we have allowed to come in this country.”<sup>41</sup> During his July 2012 Senate campaign, Ted Cruz (R-TX) described Sharia law as an “enormous problem.”<sup>42</sup> At a public event during his presidential campaign, Santorum stated, “Sharia law is incompatible with American jurisprudence and our Constitution.”<sup>43</sup>

The dangers of such xenophobic remarks became apparent through examples from the law enforcement arena. In Texas, Larry Smith, a candidate for Smith County sheriff made the following pledge to the people of his county during his 2012 campaign,

I will require officers under my command to take a course on the U.S. Constitution. This training will help officers understand the practical application of the principles of our Constitution and why Sharia and international law will never be acceptable substitutes or additions. I will personally fund this vital officer training.<sup>44</sup>

Larry Smith is now sheriff of Smith County.<sup>45</sup> Smith’s statement likely resulted in members of our communities living in Smith County no longer feeling safe reporting crimes for fear of experiencing discriminatory treatment at the hands of law enforcement, the very individuals tasked with their protection. When members of any community are afraid to turn to law enforcement or report crimes, our entire society becomes less safe. Sheriff Smith’s statements challenge established law enforcement best practices on community policing, which work to establish trust among residents.<sup>46</sup>

Xenophobic rhetoric directed at institutions also included attempts to block the construction of mosques and deny our communities spaces for religious practice. These efforts, which have generally been rejected by the courts,<sup>47</sup> appear to be based in part on the misguided fear that building or allowing Muslim religious institutions to flourish breeds terrorism in communities. In an August 2013 interview, Wyoming U.S. Senate candidate Liz Cheney made the unfounded statement that mosques are a known recruitment space for terror groups.<sup>48</sup> Rather than viewing mosques as places of

worship in the American landscape akin to churches or synagogues, political figures unfairly equated the religious institutions of our communities with terrorism. Colorado State Senator Kevin Grantham took these sentiments even further:

If we look at the philosophical underpinnings of what is called Islam . . . of that culture of Islam—those are very serious problems and they are antithetical to the American way . . . mosques are not churches like we would think of churches. [Muslims] think of mosques as a foothold into a society, as a foothold into a community, more in the cultural and in the nationalistic sense. Our churches—we don't feel that way, they're places of worship, and mosques are simply not that, and we need to take that into account when approving construction of those.<sup>49</sup>

These comments underline the view of certain political figures that institutions such as mosques do not fall within the scope of what is considered religion and therefore do not deserve the religious protections guaranteed in our country.

In Murfreesboro, Tennessee, members of the local community attempted to use the legal system to block the construction of a local mosque. When courts ruled there were no legal grounds to do so, opponents continued to interfere with religious freedom by opposing the development of a Muslim cemetery.<sup>50</sup> Anti-Muslim sentiment in Murfreesboro grew loud enough to garner national attention. In 2011, local political figures joined a chorus of xenophobic rhetoric to block the Murfreesboro mosque construction and simultaneously advance anti-Sharia state legislation. Tennessee State Representative Rick Womick insisted Muslims needed to speak out against Sharia or “they can go back to where they came from.”<sup>51</sup> This comment isolates Muslims as “foreign” to the American fabric and fails to acknowledge the role of Muslims in the U.S. while requiring them to climb extra hurdles to demonstrate their patriotism. Presidential candidate Herman Cain said of the Murfreesboro mosque construction,

It is an infringement and an abuse of our freedom of religion and I don't agree with what's happening, because this isn't an innocent mosque. It is another example of why I believe

in American laws and American courts. This is just another way to try to gradually sneak Shariah law into our laws, and I absolutely object to that.<sup>52</sup>

Cain's rhetoric suggests that any mosque or representation of Islam is incompatible with the U.S. In essence, he intimated the practice of Islam is contrary to the U.S. and part of an anti-American agenda. In an ironic twist, Cain's so-called defense of what is American actually contradicts the important protections of the First Amendment right to practice one's religion—rights that are a valued and established part of American history.

## Better Practices on Framing the Narrative: The Aftermath of the Boston Marathon Bombings

On April 15, 2013, two brothers coordinated a terrorist attack during the Boston Marathon that killed three people, injured over 250 others, and caused trauma to a city and nation.<sup>53</sup> As descriptions and images of the suspects emerged, it became clear based upon our experience of the aftermath of 9/11 that our communities would likely face a backlash following the bombings. Indeed, several perpetrators of hate violence referenced the bombings when committing biased attacks against our communities.<sup>54</sup> Despite these tragic incidents, community leaders and advocacy organizations went to great lengths to shape the narrative that accurately reflected the circumstances and minimized backlash against South Asian, Muslim, Sikh, Hindu, Middle Eastern, and Arab communities

Throughout the investigation and pursuit of the Boston Marathon bombing suspects, federal and local law enforcement agents used unbiased race-neutral terminology to describe the suspects.<sup>55</sup> Rather than focusing on race, law enforcement asked the public to focus on suspicious characteristics, such as someone who expressed a desire to target the marathon or someone who displayed a suspicious interest in researching how to create explosive devices.<sup>56</sup> “Photographs and police work, not racial-profiling by the public . . . led to the bombing suspects,” said *National Journal* reporter Elahe Izadi.<sup>57</sup>

## Remarks from Members of Congress: Another Way to Shift the Narrative

During the summer of 2012, Congresswoman Michele Bachmann led four other representatives to publicly and baselessly accuse Huma Abedin, a longtime aide to Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, of associations with radical Islamists in the Muslim Brotherhood. Fortunately, several members of Congress spoke out against Bachmann's fear-mongering. Senator John McCain (R-AZ) stated in a Senate floor speech, "When anyone—not least, a member of Congress—launches specious and degrading attacks against fellow Americans on the basis of nothing more than fear of who they are and ignorance of what they stand for, it defames the spirit of our nation and we all grow poorer because of it."

Amanda Terkel, *John McCain Slams Michele Bachmann's 'Unfounded' Attacks on Huma Abedin, Muslim-Americans*, Huffington Post (Jul. 18, 2012), [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/07/18/john-mccain-michele-bachmann-muslim\\_n\\_1683277.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/07/18/john-mccain-michele-bachmann-muslim_n_1683277.html).

Former Senator Scott Brown (R-MA) tweeted, "This kind of rhetoric has no place in our public discourse."

Amanda Terkel, *John McCain Slams Michele Bachmann's 'Unfounded' Attacks on Huma Abedin, Muslim-Americans*, Huffington Post (Jul. 18, 2012), [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/07/18/john-mccain-michele-bachmann-muslim\\_n\\_1683277.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/07/18/john-mccain-michele-bachmann-muslim_n_1683277.html).

Congressman Jim Sensenbrenner (R-WI) noted in a public forum, "Let me say that I do know Huma Abedin and I think that the comments that were made about her . . . were the wrong thing to do . . . I think the Constitution in saying that there shall never be a religious test for any office of trust and profit under the United States meant that people should not be judged on the basis of their religious beliefs or lack of religious beliefs. That was Thomas Jefferson that put that in the Constitution—I think he was right."

Scott Keyes, *Conservative Congressman Blasts Bachmann's Anti-Muslim Allegations, Stands Up For Religious Liberty*, ThinkProgress (Jul. 23, 2012), <http://thinkprogress.org/security/2012/07/23/562831/jim-sensenbrenner-huma-abedin/>.

**“These are times when all kinds of forces sometimes conspire to make people start to think of categories of people sometimes in uncharitable ways. This community will recover and will heal if we turn to each other rather than on each other.”**

-Massachusetts Governor Deval Patrick

Though media coverage of the tragic bombings varied, several outlets highlighted the danger of stereotyping and the ineffectiveness of profiling in their coverage of the incident.<sup>58</sup> When CNN reporter John King prematurely described the bombing suspects as “dark-skinned” early in the investigation, he faced an immediate backlash from colleagues in the media. Chris Hayes of MSNBC asked,

What news value exists in the adjective dark-skinned . . . What exactly is newsworthy that is communicated in that phrase? . . . That phrase is not there to convey journalistic information. What dark-skinned actually communicates with a wink and a nod is, ‘aha! All you folks who thought it was a bad Muslim who did this, you nailed it.’<sup>59</sup>

A *Washington Post* writer said, “‘dark-skinned male’ is useless information that borders on inflammatory.”<sup>60</sup> King later apologized for his “embarrassing” remarks.<sup>61</sup> Though some reporting incorrectly attributed the terrorism and violence to Islam and its followers, there was also balanced media reporting and reporters holding their industry accountable to a standard that disavows stereotypes or xenophobia. The impact of reporters reminding their consumers and communities not to focus on race or religion and to refrain from generalizations and stereotypes cannot be underestimated.

Public and elected officials also spoke out against the ills of targeting our communities after the Boston bombings. President Obama warned the public and media against rushing to judgment.<sup>62</sup> Massachusetts Governor Deval Patrick said,

These are times when all kinds of forces sometimes conspire to make people start to think of categories of people sometimes in uncharitable ways. This community will recover and will heal if we turn to each other rather than on each other.<sup>63</sup>

The actions and messages of elected officials, community organizations, religious leaders, and law enforcement officials during this crisis serve as models to be replicated and enhanced in order to better protect individuals and communities from hate crimes in the form of backlash. Appendix C catalogues almost 100 statements by various leaders, organizations, and reporters that supported an effective law enforcement investigation focused on finding the terrorists responsible for the bombing while avoiding harmful messages that incite xenophobia and hate violence.

## **Hate Violence: Where are the Safe Spaces for Our Communities?**

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In order to address the issue of hate violence, President Barack Obama signed into law the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act in 2009, which greatly expanded protections for victims of hate crimes and the role of the federal government in investigating hate crimes.<sup>64</sup> As a result of pressure from the civil rights community, many states have also passed legislation addressing hate crimes. State and local law enforcement agencies are increasingly encouraged to report hate crime statistics to the federal government. Alongside this progress in legislation and policies designed to respond to hate crimes, hate crimes as a whole have generally declined since 9/11.<sup>65</sup>

However, this statistical information belies the reality that hate crimes aimed at some of our communities spiked dramatically immediately following 9/11, and

remain a pervasive problem.<sup>66</sup> In fact, the recent decline in overall hate crimes is not spread evenly.<sup>67</sup> While there was a decline from 2010 to 2012, the number of hate crimes directed at our communities today continues to be higher than it was before 9/11.<sup>68</sup> Hate crimes against some of our communities increased by 50% from 2009 to 2010.<sup>69</sup> This incongruence suggests “9/11 created a climate in which many Americans felt united against a ‘new enemy’ and in which acts of hatred against [our communities] are ‘normalized.’”<sup>70</sup> In 2012, the FBI reported close to 5,800 hate crimes nationwide,<sup>71</sup> averaging almost 16 hate incidents per day. The majority were motivated by race (48.3%), followed by sexual orientation (19.6%), religion (19.0%), and ethnicity and national origin (11.5%).<sup>72</sup> Hate crimes motivated by anti-Muslim sentiment were the second most prevalent, accounting for over one in ten of all hate crimes related to religious bias.<sup>73</sup> However, even these numbers do not reflect the reality of attacks against our communities. Hate violence is severely underreported—some experts estimate incidents occur at a rate fifteen times higher than those reported.<sup>74</sup> It is also likely that many in our communities fear reporting such incidents, spurred by a fear of law enforcement and discriminatory government policies enacted since 9/11.

In fact, the number of hate groups has grown by almost 70% since the year 2000.<sup>75</sup> A significantly higher percentage of hate crimes were violent between 2007 and 2011 (92%), compared to a much lower number of violent crimes overall during the same time period (13%).<sup>76</sup> As outlined by our analysis, hate violence directed at our communities has increased and intensified. We will likely never know the full answer to whether hate violence fuels an increase in xenophobic political rhetoric, or vice versa. Similarly, it may remain impossible to pinpoint the range of factors that contribute to the hostile climate toward our communities. In *From Macacas to Turban Toppers*, SAALT reported on xenophobic rhetoric surrounding the proposed Park 51 Muslim community center construction project near Ground Zero<sup>77</sup> and documented at least 23 xenophobic remarks made by political figures in response to the project. In the wake of these comments, several hate crimes against South Asian, Muslim, Sikh, Hindu, Middle Eastern, and Arab individuals, communities, and institutions ensued, including the assault of a Bangladeshi taxi driver in New York City.<sup>78</sup>

During the time period included in this analysis, we noted patterns similar to those around Park 51, where xenophobic rhetoric and hate violence were in close geographic and temporal proximity to one another. In August 2012, *Salon* reported eight attacks on South Asian, Muslim, Sikh, Hindu, Middle Eastern, and Arab institutions within eleven days following xenophobic statements by Congressman Joe Walsh:

Notoriously brusque Rep. Joe Walsh, R-Ill., who represents Lombard, may have helped stoke anti-Muslim hatred with comments at a town hall meeting in Elk Grove. Walsh sowed the seeds of mistrust and suspicion by alleging that ‘radical Islam’ had made a home in the suburbs of Chicago; that ‘It’s in Elk Grove, it’s in Addison, it’s in Elgin. It’s here’; and that *radical Muslims are ‘trying to kill Americans every week.’* Walsh’s warnings were met with applause.

Many Muslims in Chicago spoke out to condemn Walsh’s comments. ‘How long are we going to go pretending like there is no relationship between this acquiescence of hatred and politics and the inclination of violence on the ground?’ asked Ahmed Rehab, executive director of the Chicago chapter of the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR-Chicago). ‘You cannot demonize a community and then be surprised when they’re under attack.’<sup>79</sup>

Walsh’s comments came on the heels of a major July 2012 news story when a group of Congressional Republicans made anti-Muslim remarks on a national platform through their baseless allegations against Huma Abedin.<sup>80</sup> Though it is difficult to establish a direct connection between Walsh’s remarks and the attacks against Abedin, Walsh’s statements and those against Abedin directly preceded a wave of hate incidents in August 2012 targeting mosques and other religious institutions in our communities. The most horrific of these incidents was the Oak Creek, Wisconsin shootings, described in greater detail below.

In another incident targeting the Sikh community, the mayor of Garrett, Indiana threw out pamphlets on Sikhism from a Sikh-owned convenience store, citing concerns the pamphlets were against Christianity.<sup>81</sup> During the month of the Oak Creek shootings, an

**“Violent extremism has been aided by mainstream media figures and politicians who have used their platforms to legitimize false propaganda about immigrants and other minorities and spread the kind of paranoid conspiracy theories on which militia groups thrive.”**

-Southern Poverty Law Center

acid bomb was thrown at an Islamic school in Walsh’s district. Muslim graves were desecrated in another Chicago suburb on multiple occasions, and at least eight mosques throughout the country were attacked. The connection between these incidents is unknown; yet at minimum, xenophobic rhetoric in conjunction with discriminatory government policies create an environment in which hate incidents are more prevalent. According to the Southern Poverty Law Center, the connection is much more concrete. The organization reports violent extremism “has been aided by mainstream media figures and politicians who have used their platforms to legitimize false propaganda about immigrants and other minorities and spread the kind of paranoid conspiracy theories on which militia groups thrive.”<sup>82</sup>

Regardless of the relationship between xenophobic political speech and hate violence, both are indicators of the climate confronting our communities. Of the instances of hate violence that SAALT collected from 2011 to 2014, 84% were motivated by anti-Muslim sentiment. This strikingly high percentage parallels our findings regarding xenophobic political rhetoric, where over 90% of the comments were based on anti-Muslim sentiment.

## **Attacks on Individuals: The Cost of Suspicion**

Of the 76 hate violence incidents SAALT gathered between January 2011 and April 2014, nearly 45% directly targeted individual members of our communities. These incidents ranged from car vandalisms and firebombs to assaults and murders. A consistent pattern emerged: 84% of hate violence instances were motivated by anti-Muslim sentiment. For example, in early 2014, a woman in Oklahoma who wore a headscarf and according to police reports had the “appearance of someone that typically is of the Islamic faith” was physically assaulted, her car tires were slashed with a knife, and she was repeatedly called a “Muslim bitch.”<sup>83</sup> Similar anti-Muslim slurs were common in the hate violence incidents we collected, with nearly half involving oral or written anti-Muslim slurs.

As seen following acts of terrorism in the past, a series of hate violence incidents occurred after the Boston Marathon bombings in April 2013. In many of these incidents, hate violence perpetrators specifically referenced the Boston bombing. For example, a few weeks after the Boston Marathon bombings, an Algerian-American man was assaulted in Cambridge, Massachusetts. His attackers called him a terrorist and told him he looked like Tamerlan Tsarvaev, one of the perpetrators of the bombing.<sup>84</sup> In Virginia, Mohamed Salim—an Iraqi War veteran, Army reservist, and U.S. citizen—was attacked by a passenger in his taxi. Salim was subjected to a lengthy anti-Muslim rant that included comparisons to the Boston Marathon bombers and sustained serious injuries, including a fractured jaw and a concussion.<sup>85</sup> Neither his military service to the U.S. nor his character were relevant. Salim was tagged a terrorist by the perpetrator simply by virtue of being perceived as Muslim.

**A consistent pattern emerged: 84% of hate violence instances were motivated by anti-Muslim sentiment.**



Apart from the aftermath of the Boston Marathon bombings, hate violence occurred throughout the U.S. in both rural and urban areas, in locales where South Asians are established in the community, and where they are emerging populations throughout the period covered in this report. A thread that links these incidents remains a level of blame aimed by perpetrators at members of our communities for the 9/11 terrorist attacks. In June 2011, a New York City resident was accused of being Osama Bin Laden’s brother and then physically assaulted, resulting in the loss of three of his teeth.<sup>86</sup> Sadly, the victim’s son had lost his eye two years earlier as a result of being attacked in a hate crime as well.<sup>87</sup> In January 2013, after killing an Indian man in New York City by pushing him onto a subway platform as a train was approaching, the perpetrator stated, “I hate Hindus and Muslims ever since 2001 when they put down the twin towers.”<sup>88</sup> Attacks directed at individual members of our communities throughout the country underline the importance of developing preventive strategies to address hate violence before such tragedies recur.

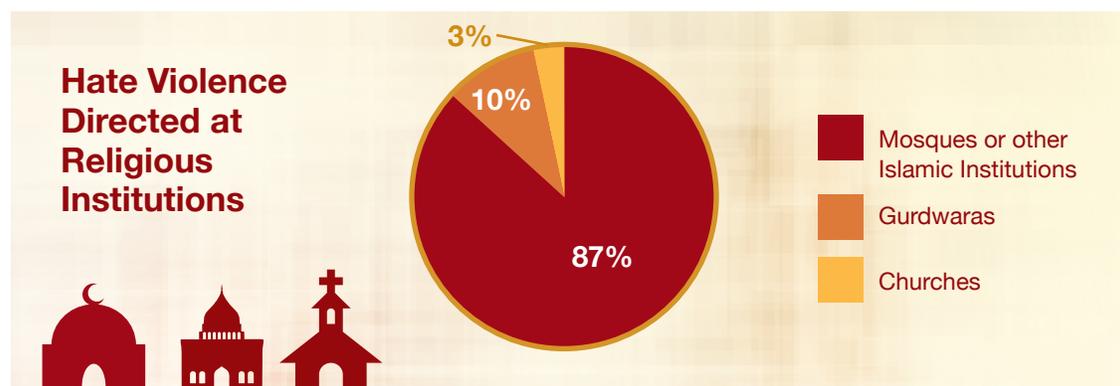
### Targeting Religious Institutions and Community Spaces: Threatening Acts of Faith, Worship, and Religious Practice or Affiliation

Thirty incidents of hate violence directed at religious institutions took place during the time period covered in this report. Eighty-seven per cent of these instances involved Islamic institutions.

The attack on the Sikh Temple of Wisconsin in Oak Creek, Wisconsin, stands out among incidents of hate violence involving gurdwaras. On the morning of August 5, 2012, Wade Michael Page walked into the gurdwara and shot and killed worshipers Paramjit Kaur, Satwant Singh Kaleka, Prakash Singh, Sita Singh, Ranjit Singh, and Suveg Singh. Page, a known white supremacist, sought out a religious institution as he targeted innocent congregants during their weekly gathering before also killing himself. U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder described this horrific act of violence as “an act of terrorism, an act of hatred,” and “a hate crime that is anathema to the founding principles of our nation and to who we are as an American people.”<sup>89</sup>

Of the many hate incidents targeting mosques, a variety of offensive and disrespectful tactics were used by perpetrators to send a message that Islam is un-American and its congregants are unwelcome. These tactics included arson, shootings, bomb threats, throwing objects such as pig legs, spray-painting hate messages, and other property destruction. In San Diego, California, a man called congregants at a mosque “terrorist rats” and threatened to kill them during the holy month of Ramadan.<sup>90</sup> In Joplin, Missouri, an Islamic Center was set afire for the second time in a month, resulting in the mosque burning to the ground.<sup>91</sup> While these incidents range in severity, their individual and collective impact convey a clear message to Muslims and the rest of society that Islam is not a respected or protected religion in the U.S.

Beyond attacks on Islamic institutions, we also documented numerous attacks on religious institutions rooted in South Asian, Muslim, Sikh, Hindu, Middle



Eastern, and Arab communities. The last three years saw at least two more attacks on gurdwaras and one against a church attended predominantly by Arab and Middle Eastern congregants. In Riverside, California, a gurdwara was vandalized and the word “terrorist” written on the temple walls just days short of the one-year anniversary of the Oak Creek shootings.<sup>92</sup> Similarly, a gurdwara in Sterling Heights, Michigan, was vandalized. The perpetrators drew a cross and a gun and defaced the building with profanities, racial slurs, and references to the 9/11 attacks. A predominantly Arab and Middle Eastern church in Dearborn, Michigan, was vandalized for the second time in two weeks when perpetrators broke two outer windows of the church by throwing crabapples at them.<sup>93</sup> Similar to those on Islamic institutions, attacks on gurdwaras and churches send a message that religions institutions in our communities are unwelcome in the U.S, and will be targets of violence and intimidation.

Muslim Americans were also forced to confront the reality that their children might be harmed or traumatized if enrolled in Islamic schools. Two Islamic schools were the targets of hate incidents during the research of this report: one in San Diego, California,<sup>94</sup> and another near Chicago, Illinois, the latter involving an acid bomb.<sup>95</sup> The Chicago-area Muslim community also confronted the desecration of headstones at a gravesite that included anti-Muslim slurs, gang symbols, and hate messages such as “murderer,” “liar,” and “pig.”<sup>96</sup> The grave of a prominent Arab-American activist was vandalized over five times.<sup>97</sup> These incidents underline the ways Muslim communities continue to be targeted in the U.S., regardless of their history or the sanctity of the setting.

In addition to attacks on religious institutions, schools, and cemeteries, we documented approximately ten incidents of hate violence in community spaces such as stores and community centers. These represent venues where communities expect to safely gather and partake in daily activities. In Green Bay, Wisconsin, a man started a fire at a Sikh-owned convenience store and articulated his motivation as “[to] get them the hell out of Wisconsin.”<sup>98</sup> The incident was just seven months after the tragic gurdwara shooting in Oak Creek.<sup>99</sup>

These examples of hate violence that target the everyday lives of members of our communities, including children and loved ones who have been laid

to rest, severely impact individuals and their ability to enjoy community life. For members of our communities going to practice their faith, these attacks signify that their religious choices are not protected in the U.S.—the antithesis of the principles on which this country was founded—leaving our communities left to question where they are truly safe.

## **Better Practices in Policy Advocacy: Looking Toward Prevention After Oak Creek**

After the Oak Creek tragedy, civil rights organizations coalesced with new purpose: to push for policy change to prevent future hate crimes. Within a day of the tragedy, advocacy groups came together to offer support and assistance to community members in Oak Creek directly impacted by the shooting. SAALT coordinated regular national calls to organize local and national response efforts, with nearly 100 participants. Over 150 organizations, led by the Sikh Coalition and SAALT, advocated together for a congressional hearing on hate crimes.<sup>100</sup> As a result, Senator Dick Durbin (D-IL), a long-time advocate for civil rights

**Through the coordinated advocacy efforts of community organizations and their work with government and elected officials, incidents targeting Sikh, Hindu, and Arab individuals will be included in data collection of hate crimes beginning in 2015.**

**Given that our communities are often treated as a presumed threat to national security, new accounts of widespread surveillance aimed at South Asian, Muslim, and Arab residents are no longer surprising. Coupled with advances in surveillance technologies, this dynamic creates a perfect storm for government agencies and entities to target our communities without suspicion or accountability.**

issues, chaired a “Hate Crimes and Threat of Domestic Extremism” Hearing in the Senate Judiciary Committee approximately one month after the Oak Creek shooting. Harpreet Singh Saini, an 18-year-old whose mother was killed in the Oak Creek tragedy, spoke about his personal loss. This collaboration between advocacy organizations across lines of race, religion, and sexual orientation with members of Congress on a national hearing amplified the voices of impacted individuals and elevated the issue of hate violence in the media and for the general public.

Prior to the incident in Oak Creek, the FBI collected information on hate crimes via a form that did not account for attacks against Sikhs, Hindus, or Arabs. Given the numerous hate crimes against South Asian, Muslim, Sikh, Hindu, Middle Eastern, and Arab

individuals, particularly since 9/11, it was crucial that these individual categories be included in order to fully understand and address the scale and scope of hate violence directed at our communities. Organizations such as the Sikh American Legal Defense and Education Fund (SALDEF) and the Sikh Coalition advocated for years for the categorization of anti-Sikh hate crimes. The Oak Creek tragedy underscored the urgent need for this reform—without it, victims of anti-Sikh violence continue to be unjustly excluded from the government’s accounting of hate crimes. In addition, the lack of data has, to date, limited a full understanding of the frequency and scope of hate violence, its root causes, or potential solutions.

Through the coordinated advocacy efforts of community organizations and their work with government and elected officials, incidents targeting Sikh, Hindu, and Arab individuals will be included in data collection of hate crimes beginning in 2015.<sup>101</sup> SAALT and many other organizations continue to collaborate with the FBI and the DOJ to ensure this change is implemented effectively, meaningfully, and in a culturally competent way. This important policy change will inform a deeper understanding of the root causes of hate violence, help pinpoint preventative measures, and assist law enforcement with building relationships with our communities to encourage reporting hate violence.

## **Factors That Contribute to the Perception of Our Communities as Suspicious and Dangerous: Spotlight on Surveillance**

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This report provides a detailed analysis of two factors that contribute the perception of our communities as suspicious in an increasingly hostile environment: xenophobic political rhetoric and hate violence. Other contributing factors include the growth of an Islamophobia industry that demonizes Muslims over the internet and social media, government policies

that profile our communities through immigration enforcement and other tactics that target individuals presumed suspicious, and government surveillance. Though an in-depth discussion of these additional factors to the climate faced by our communities is outside the scope of this report, we examined the surveillance of our communities given the recent revelations on the depth of government spying on our communities' leaders.

## Under Surveillance without Basis or Accountability

Given the secretive nature of government surveillance, the public has barely scratched the surface in understanding the scope of surveillance to which our communities—and in many ways all who reside in the U.S.—are subject.<sup>102</sup> Through the rise of fusion centers (which promote information sharing between law enforcement agencies), joint terrorism task forces, and suspicious activity reporting programs in the name of national security, our communities are regularly the objects of government surveillance. The civil liberties protections that are available to us are, at best, opaque.<sup>103</sup> Given that our communities are often treated as a presumed threat to national security, new accounts of widespread surveillance aimed at South Asian, Muslim, and Arab residents are no longer surprising. Coupled with advances in surveillance technologies, this dynamic creates a perfect storm for government agencies and entities to target our communities without suspicion or accountability.

In July 2014, Glenn Greenwald and Murtaza Hussain used documents associated with the Edward Snowden leaks to reveal longtime spying by the FBI and NSA aimed Muslim-American community leaders.<sup>104</sup> Civil liberties advocates presume this spying is discriminatory in nature, given the prominent Americans that were monitored “all led highly public, outwardly exemplary lives . . . Some have even climbed the ranks of the U.S. national security and foreign policy establishments.”<sup>105</sup> Civil and human rights organizations, including SAALT, have called on President Obama to explain why our communities' leaders are under surveillance.<sup>106</sup>

Surveillance aimed at our communities appears to be widespread among law enforcement agencies at multiple

levels. At the federal level, the FBI has engaged in suspicionless surveillance of Muslim communities and other communities of color throughout the U.S.<sup>107</sup> One of the most egregious instances of local surveillance involves the NYPD's widespread targeting of Muslim communities throughout the East Coast. This surveillance was outlined in a series of Associated Press reports beginning in August 2011.<sup>108</sup>

The DOJ, despite requests from over 120 organizations to investigate the NYPD's surveillance of Muslim communities in New York and New Jersey, has yet to publicly announce any investigation into the NYPD's discriminatory practices.<sup>109</sup> Similarly, the federal government has provided little substantive response to the outcry following the revelations of FBI and NSA surveillance of Muslim community leaders,<sup>110</sup> though White House officials did voice disapproval over the use of racial or religious slurs, such as “Muhammad Raghead” in the course of these surveillance operations.<sup>111</sup>

## Better Practices on Organizing: Changing the Climate by Politically and Legislatively Targeting the NYPD

New York City has been the locus of at least thirteen hate incidents during the period included in this report. Incidents in New York City range from mosques being fire-bombed,<sup>112</sup> to the violent assault of a Columbia University Sikh professor as perpetrators yelled “Osama” and “terrorist” at him,<sup>113</sup> to several brutal murders.<sup>114</sup> In addition to the high incidence and severity of hate violence directed at our communities in New York City, our communities were subjected to consistent xenophobic rhetoric from Congressman Peter King. King, who represents parts of Long Island, New York, espoused xenophobic rhetoric on at least five occasions in addition to chairing congressional hearings that unfairly cast suspicion on the entire Muslim community in the U.S. by singling them out for special scrutiny.<sup>115</sup> In January 2011, King stated in a radio interview that “over 80 percent of the mosques in this country are controlled by radical Imams.”<sup>116</sup> Comments in this vein from a powerful political figure serve as a dangerous catalyst in an already hostile climate for

## Incidents in New York City range from mosques being fire-bombed, to the violent assault of a Columbia University Sikh professor as perpetrators yelled “Osama” and “terrorist” at him, to several brutal murders.

Sources: CBS News, Huffington Post, DNAInfo.com

our community members. It is unsurprising that many incidents of hate violence took place in New York City, given its neighboring political leaders appeared eager to cast our community as suspect, dangerous, and disloyal.

In addition to his problematic rhetoric, King expressed broad support for the surveillance of Muslim communities.<sup>117</sup> The NYPD’s unfettered targeting of communities of color through a variety of tactics is well-documented, including surveillance of Muslim communities and the notorious “stop and frisk” program.<sup>118</sup> New York City is also the symbol of the

9/11 terrorist attacks. It was against this backdrop that several community organizations, including members of the National Coalition of South Asian Organizations (NCSO), organized to change the NYPD’s unfair and degrading practices. NCSO member DRUM-South Asian Organizing Center (DRUM) played a key role in the organized strategy to reform the NYPD. DRUM and a multitude of other organizations including the Arab American Association of New York (AAANY) organized together across racial and ethnic groups and social justice sectors to target the NYPD in a multi-faceted campaign against misplaced suspicion faced by all communities of color. The campaign sought to change discriminatory NYPD policies through social media, legislative change to demand law enforcement accountability, and leveraging electoral power to usher in a new mayoral administration likely to end NYPD’s harmful practices.<sup>119</sup> The campaign was largely successful, drawing national attention to NYPD abuses. In August 2013, the New York City Council passed the Community Safety Act (legislation that barred discriminatory policing and mandated NYPD accountability). In April 2014, the NYPD’s Demographics Unit, which was central to its surveillance of Muslim residents, was disbanded.<sup>120</sup>

Though these victories are steps in the larger struggle to reform the NYPD and end suspicionless surveillance of Muslim communities, they signify the power of diverse communities of color coming together and waging a campaign against an often impenetrable law enforcement institution.



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## Community Impact: A Chilling Effect on All Our Rights

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There is no question that the hostile climate faced by South Asian, Muslim, Sikh, Hindu, Middle Eastern, and Arab communities in the U.S. has a detrimental impact on the psyche of our communities. In SAALT's 2012 report *In Our Own Words: Narratives of South Asian New Yorkers Affected by Racial and Religious Profiling*, members of our communities reported strained relationships, a fear of engaging in their regular faith-based behaviors, and a loss of faith in the government's ability to protect them in times of need as a result of baseless suspicion.<sup>121</sup> Another report that delved into the impact of government surveillance on Muslim communities in New York City found the practice impeded our communities' ability to freely practice religion, obstructed their freedom of speech, and curtailed their political activism.<sup>122</sup>

Research shows a connection between racism and discrimination and psychological distress.<sup>123</sup> A 2009 study of the psychological impact of 9/11 backlash found that a quarter of Detroit's Arab Americans experienced abuse or adverse health effects as a result of bias and discrimination.<sup>124</sup> Hostility and discrimination directed at our communities curtails community members' ability to fully enjoy and exercise their fundamental rights. Given our nation's commitment to equality and our historical interest in addressing the experiential cost of discrimination, xenophobic political rhetoric and hate violence are particularly un-American and egregious. Our legal system and Constitutional framework are designed to protect against individuals feeling the need to alter faith-based behavior and to allow for all to freely practice their religion.<sup>125</sup>

Moreover, our communities' ability to fully enjoy their First Amendment freedoms of religion, speech, and association is directly chilled when our religious institutions and community spaces are attacked and when political leaders continue to view us with suspicion, fear, and vitriol. After shots were fired at an Illinois mosque in March 2014, civil rights leaders aptly noted, "No one should have to go to their place of worship worried if they'll make it back home alive."<sup>126</sup> These elements of an already hostile climate aimed at our communities severely impede our fundamental right to religious practice and threaten the rights of all Americans.

# Conclusion and Recommendations

Xenophobic political rhetoric and hate violence have deep and troubling impacts on our communities, which continue to grow rapidly nationwide. Hate rhetoric and violence point to an increasingly hostile climate facing our communities, and stands contrary to the very fabric and values of our nation. Our communities and allies must continue to shed light on the myriad of ways that South Asian, Muslim, Sikh, Hindu, Middle Eastern, and Arab individuals and communities at large continue to be targeted, menaced, and surveilled. Key strategies for our communities and allies include building meaningful partnerships with media, political figures, and other social justice sectors in order to change the current framework and ensure that freedom and equality are truly realized and indeed preserved for all communities in the U.S.

## Recommendations for the President:

- Ensure that all political speech emanating from the Administration upholds the American values of fairness and equality; swiftly and strongly condemn xenophobic and hateful rhetoric by other political figures.
- Create a National Task Force to Prevent Hate Violence focused on addressing incidents directed at South Asian, Muslim, Sikh, Hindu, Middle Eastern, and Arab communities. This task force would leverage a holistic approach and develop relationships between communities and government to address hate violence by creating comprehensive and coordinated preventive measures and response protocols at the federal, state, and local levels.
- Rigorously enforce hate crimes legislation and ensure that law enforcement receive cultural and religious competency trainings to understand the challenges our communities face when reporting hate violence.
- Revise the Department of Justice 2003 Guidance on the Use of Race by Federal Law Enforcement. Critical changes would include prohibiting profiling based on categories of national origin and religion; removing the national security and border integrity loopholes; ensuring the application of the Guidance to state and local law enforcement agencies; prohibiting surveillance activities and data collection; and create enforceability and compliance mechanisms.
- End suspicionless and discriminatory surveillance of our communities by law enforcement agencies; investigate state and local law enforcement for discriminatory practices and the use of biased and discriminatory trainings; and proactively issue statements condemning these practices.

## Recommendations for Congress:

- Insist that all political speech emanating from members of Congress upholds American values of fairness and equality; swiftly and strongly condemn xenophobic and hateful rhetoric by other political figures.
- Pass the End Racial Profiling Act (ERPA) to end law enforcement profiling on the basis of race, religion, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, and national origin.
- Conduct congressional hearings to investigate the discriminatory and suspicionless surveillance of our communities by all levels of law enforcement.

## Recommendations to Community Members, Leaders, and Allies:

- Educate communities about their rights; encourage reporting of hate violence; and foster healing in our communities in the aftermath of incidents of hate violence.
- Voice opposition to political figures engaging in xenophobic rhetoric and support those who promote equality and freedom for all.
- Promote messaging that supports and welcomes our communities; work collaboratively to advance our communities' policy agenda; build collaborative relationships across sectors to address the hostile climate facing our communities.
- Continue building meaningful relationships with local and national media to enhance critical reporting of xenophobic rhetoric and hate incidents. Amplify media outlets that expose xenophobic political rhetoric and shed light on the climate facing our communities.

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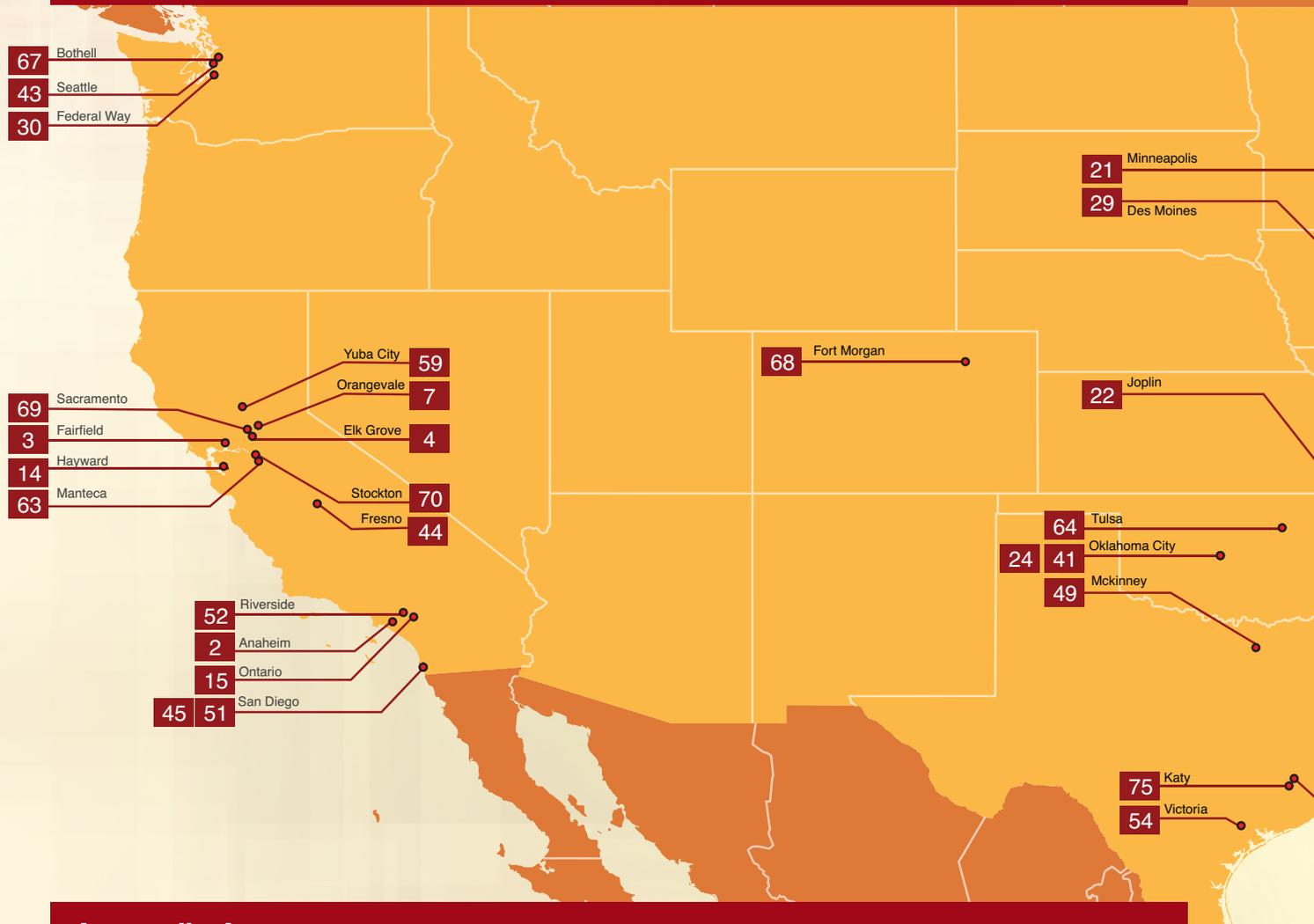
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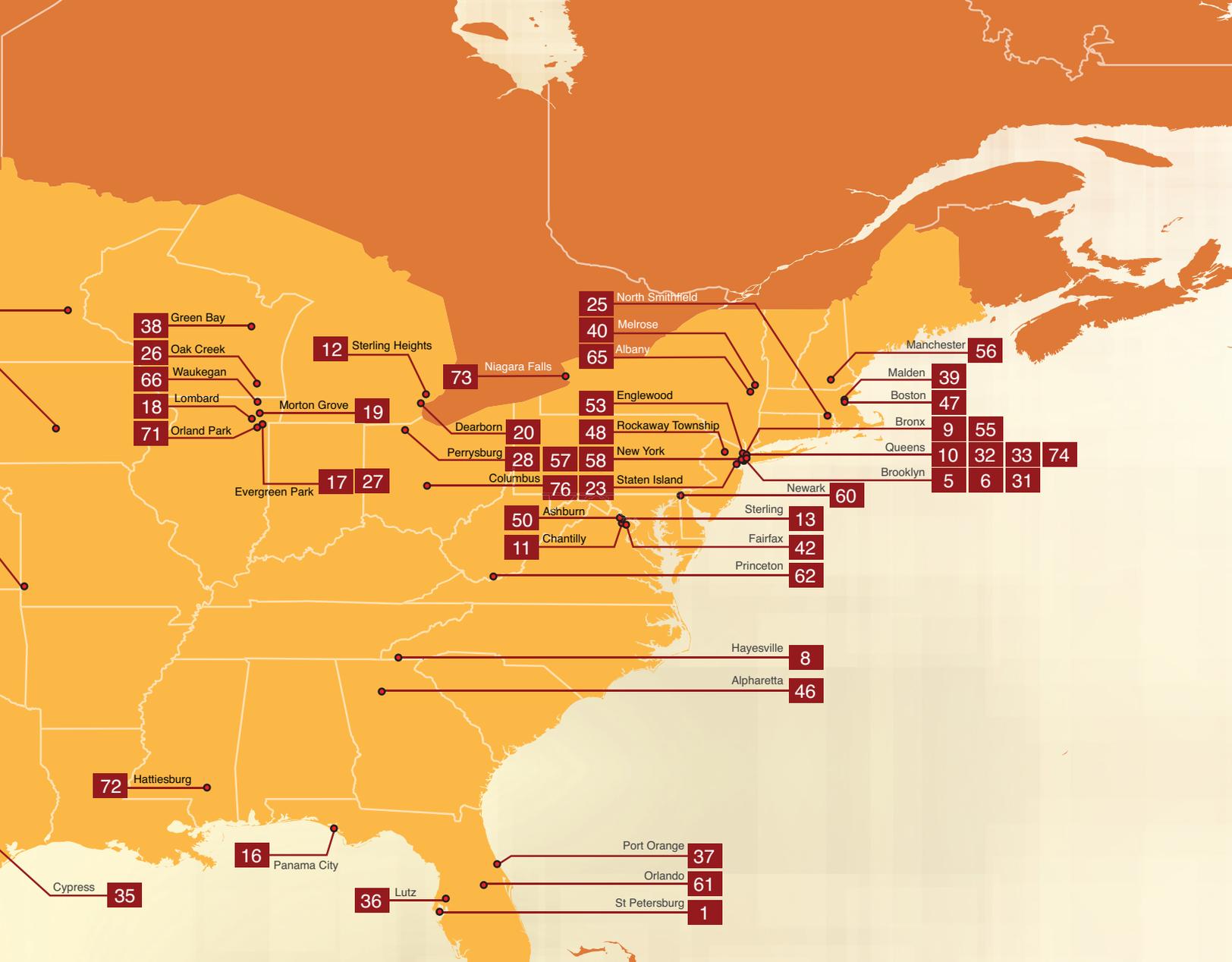
# Hate Violence Incidents Targeting South Asian, Muslim, Sikh, Arab, Hindu, Middle Eastern, and Arab Communities Nationwide: January 2011 – April 2014



## Appendix A

### List of Hate Violence Incidents Targeting South Asian, Muslim, Sikh, Arab, Hindu, Middle Eastern, and Arab Communities Nationwide: January 2011 – April 2014

1	February 2011	St. Petersburg, FL	A man in Florida was stabbed after the perpetrator learned that he is Muslim. <sup>1</sup>
2	March 2011	Anaheim, CA	A person keyed an Egyptian woman's car while she was grocery shopping, sprayed one side of the car with foam, and taped a torn page from a copy of the Quran with the words "F*** it" written on it. <sup>2</sup>
3	March 2011	Fairfield, IA	An Iraqi-born filmmaker was punched and kicked by four men who yelled racial slurs because of the similarity between his name (Usama) and Osama. <sup>3</sup>
4	April 2011	Elk Grove, CA	Two elderly Sikh men were murdered during their routine evening stroll. <sup>4</sup>
5	June 2011	Brooklyn, NY	A man poured beer on his Turkish neighbor, shoved her into a car, called her an "Arab terrorist," and screamed "F***** Arabs!" and "F***** terrorists!" at her. When the woman's husband came outside to help his wife, the attacker punched him in the face. <sup>5</sup>



6	June 2011	Brooklyn, NY	A Sikh man lost three teeth after being punched and thrown out of his seat while riding the New York City subway. The attacker called the victim “brother of Osama,” and said “Taliban, you sit there!” and “This is for you, Osama!” during the attack. <sup>6</sup>
7	September 2011	Orangevale, CA	A dry cleaning store owned by Christian Palestinians was broken into and set on fire with an ignited gas. A swastika and the words “f***** Arab” were written on the wall outside of the store. <sup>7</sup>
8	September 2011	Hayesville, NC	A Sikh-owned convenience store was found on fire and spray-painted with the words “911” and “go Home.” <sup>8</sup>
9	September 2011	Bronx, NY	On the day before September 11, 2011, a mosque received a partially burned Quran delivered inside an envelope containing white powder and papers with anti-Muslim drawings. <sup>9</sup>
10	January 2012	Queens, NY	Molotov cocktails were thrown at an Islamic center, a bodega, and two houses—one of which is used as a Hindu place of worship. The blasts caused a door to be damaged at the Islamic center, while approximately 80 worshippers were in the center. <sup>10</sup>

11	January 2012	Chantilly, VA	Rocks were thrown at the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community Center, resulting in smashed windows. <sup>11</sup>
12	February 2012	Sterling Heights, MI	The images of a gun and a cross were spray-painted on a gurdwara, along with the words “fcuk [sic] you,” and a reference to Mohammad. <sup>12</sup>
13	February 2012	Sterling, VA	A Sikh family received a letter that read “We ask you to leave the country as soon as possible otherwise one of our people is going to shoot you dead. Don’t attempt to relocate somewhere else in America, as people are closely monitoring your day to day activities.” <sup>13</sup>
14	August 2012	Hayward, CA	While worshipers were attending evening prayers during Ramadan at the American Muslim Association, four youth threw oranges and lemons against the side of the building. <sup>14</sup>
15	August 2012	Ontario, CA	Three pig legs were thrown at a home being used for Muslim prayers. <sup>15</sup>
16	August 2012	Panama City, FL	A Muslim man heard a loud noise outside of his family’s home at 3:45 a.m. and discovered that a fire had broken out. When police arrived at the home, they smelled gasoline and found a broken and burned mason jar outside of the window. <sup>16</sup>
17	August 2012	Evergreen Park, IL	A Palestinian man visiting his father’s grave arrived to find the words “raghaed [sic] killer” written on his father’s gravestone. The vandal also wrote insults regarding the Prophet Muhammad on the stone. <sup>17</sup>
18	August 2012	Lombard, IL	A bottle filled with acid and other materials was thrown at a window of the College Preparatory School of America, an Islamic school, while worshipers were attending evening prayers during Ramadan. <sup>18</sup>
19	August 2012	Morton Grove, IL	A man fired a pellet rifle at the Muslim Education Center while 500 worshipers were attending evening prayers during Ramadan. <sup>19</sup>
20	August 2012	Dearborn, MI	Vandals used crabapples to break two outer window panes of the Savior Lutheran Church, which has a predominantly Christian Arab and Middle Eastern congregation. The church was vandalized in a similar manner just one week prior. <sup>20</sup>
21	August 2012	Minneapolis, MN	A car was set on fire outside of the Abubakar As-Saddique Islamic Center. Before setting the car on fire, the arsonist spent an hour throwing “burning material in the direction of the mosque.” This Islamic Center was also the subject of an arson attack in 2006, which caused smoke damage and damaged religious texts. <sup>21</sup>
22	August 2012	Joplin, MO	The Islamic Society of Joplin was burned to the ground, resulting in the total loss of the building. This was the second arson at the Islamic Society in a little over one month. In 2008, the Islamic Society’s sign was torched. <sup>22</sup>
23	August 2012	Staten Island, NY	After derogatory comments were posted on a site that mentioned an upcoming Eid celebration at a city park, worshipers showed up to find three packages of uncooked bacon scattered throughout the park. <sup>23</sup>

24	August 2012	Oklahoma City, OK	A car pulled up in front of the Grand Mosque of Oklahoma City and those inside the car shot paintballs at the front doors of the building. <sup>24</sup>
25	August 2012	North Smithfield, RI	A man head-butted a sign at the Masjid Al-Islam, resulting in damage to the sign. <sup>25</sup>
26	August 2012	Oak Creek, WI	Six people were killed and four others injured when a gunman went on a shooting rampage at a Sikh gurdwara. <sup>26</sup>
27	September 2012	Evergreen Park, IL	A gravestone was defaced with gang symbols, the word "PIG," and the phrase "Mohamad is a Liar & a F**** we whont [sic] Be taken Alive!" <sup>27</sup>
28	September 2012	Perrysburg, OH	A man entered the Islamic Center of Greater Toledo, poured gasoline on the main floor of the mosque, and set it on fire. <sup>28</sup>
29	October 2012	Des Moines, IA	A banner at the Obama campaign building was spray-painted with the words "Muslim Lier [sic]." <sup>29</sup>
30	October 2012	Federal Way, WA	A Sikh taxi driver was pulled out of his car and beaten, punched, and stomped upon by his passenger, causing multiple injuries, a week of hospitalization, and physical therapy. During the assault, the perpetrator referred to the driver as both Iraqi and Iranian and yelled him anti-Arab and anti-gay slurs. <sup>30</sup>
31	November 2012	Brooklyn, NY	An Iranian shopkeeper was shot and killed with the same gun used to kill an Egyptian man in July 2012 and another Egyptian man in August 2012. All three victims were killed within one five-mile radius. <sup>31</sup>
32	November 2012	Queens, NY	A 70 year-old man was attacked by two young men after the two men asked the 70 year-old man whether he was Hindu or Muslim. <sup>32</sup>
33	November 2012	Queens, NY	A Muslim man was stabbed outside of Masjid al-Saaliheen at 4:45 a.m. on a Sunday while opening the mosque for prayer. <sup>33</sup>
34	December 2012	Sunnyside, NY	An Indian immigrant died after being pushed onto the tracks of an oncoming New York City subway train by a woman. <sup>34</sup> The woman later admitted to pushing the man because she has hated "Hindus and Muslims ever since 2001 when they put down the twin towers" and stated that since 2001, she has been "beating them up." <sup>35</sup>
35	December 2012	Cypress, TX	Worshippers at the Islamic Outreach Center arrived for evening prayer to find a mutilated, dead pig by the mosque's doorstep. <sup>36</sup>
36	January 2013	Lutz, FL	A man shot at a Middle Eastern man and the woman he was with 20 times with a BB gun, calling the victim a "n***** with a white girl." <sup>37</sup>
37	March 2013	Port Orange, FL	A Sikh man was followed and shot at six times while driving over the Dunlawton Bridge. He was hit by two of the bullets. <sup>38</sup>
38	March 2013	Green Bay, WI	A man entered a Sikh-owned convenience store, doused the register in gasoline, and set it on fire. The attacker wanted to "round up terrorists and torture them," according to authorities. <sup>39</sup>
39	April 2013	Malden, MA	A woman in a hijab, while pushing a baby stroller, was hit in her shoulder while her attacker said "F*** you, f*** Muslims, you are terrorists." <sup>40</sup>

40	April 2013	Melrose, NY	A Bangladeshi man was viciously beaten by three to four men who followed him as he left a restaurant. One of the assailants yelled “Yeah, he’s a f**king Arab.” The attack resulted in the victim’s left shoulder being dislocated. <sup>41</sup>
41	April 2013	Oklahoma City, OK	The American Muslim Association building was spray-painted with pentagrams and graphic images. This mosque was also vandalized by paintballs in August 2012. <sup>42</sup>
42	April 2013	Fairfax, VA	A cab driver, who is an Iraq war veteran, was punched by his passenger, who said “if you’re a Muslim, you’re a ***** jihadist,” and “you’re a ***** Muslim.” The cab driver suffered a fractured jaw. <sup>43</sup>
43	April 2013	Seattle, WA	A man asked a Muslim woman with her family at Seattle Center how many husbands she had before calling the family “terrorists” and saying he would “shoot them all.” <sup>44</sup>
44	May 2013	Fresno, CA	An 81-year-old Sikh man was brutally beaten with a steel rod outside of the Nanaksar Sikh Temple, resulting in broken ribs and injuries to his head and lungs. <sup>45</sup>
45	May 2013	San Diego, CA	A woman left three threatening voicemail messages with the Islamic School of San Diego, one of which said “I’m going to throw a bomb in your f**king school.” <sup>46</sup>
46	May 2013	Alpharetta, GA	A sign at the Islamic Center of North Fulton was spray-painted with the phrase “London justice” one week after an attack that occurred in London involving two Muslim men. <sup>47</sup>
47	May 2013	Boston, MA	A Muslim student was attacked outside of a restaurant after the attackers called him a “terrorist” and told him that he looked like one of the Boston bombers. <sup>48</sup>
48	June 2013	Rockaway, NJ	A swastika was spray-painted on the door of the Islamic Center of Morris County. <sup>49</sup>
49	June 2013	McKinney, TX	At least two dozen paintballs were shot at the McKinney Islamic Association. <sup>50</sup>
50	June 2013	Ashburn, VA	A passenger of a Somali cab driver verbally harassed and poked him, accusing Muslims of coming to the U.S. to work as cab drivers to “blow themselves up.” When the driver pulled over to call 911, the passenger also called 911, saying “[the cab driver] is Muslim, so I’m a little afraid.” <sup>51</sup>
51	July 2013	San Diego, CA	A man walked into the Islamic Center of San Diego and said “I’m going to kill all of you.” <sup>52</sup>
52	July 2013	Riverside, CA	The word “terrorist” was spray-painted throughout a California gurdwara’s complex. <sup>53</sup>
53	July 2013	Englewood, NJ	The Mehfil-e-Shah-e-Khorasan Charitable Trust Mosque received a string of threatening phone calls during Ramadan. <sup>54</sup>
54	July 2013	Victoria, TX	Someone spray-painted “H8 [hate]” on the Victoria Islamic Center. <sup>55</sup>
55	August 2013	Bronx, NY	A disabled, cane-dependent Bangladeshi man was stabbed twice from behind after leaving the Parkchester Jame Masjid. <sup>56</sup>

56	September 2013	Manchester, NH	Three youth threw rocks and bricks at the Islamic Center of Greater Manchester, breaking windows, and attempted arson on the mosque. <sup>57</sup>
57	September 2013	New York, NY	A man knocked a woman's protest sign in her face and called her a "f**king terrorist" while the woman was participating in a protest against the military actions in Egypt. <sup>58</sup>
58	September 2013	New York, NY	A Sikh Columbia University professor had to have his jaw wired after being punched repeatedly by young men who shouted "get him!," "Osama," and "terrorist" at him. <sup>59</sup>
59	October 2013	Yuba City, CA	A Sikh Little League coach's truck had the message "we want no Hindus at SBLL [Sutter Buttes Little League]" scratched into it. <sup>60</sup>
60	October 2013	Newark, DE	Two teenagers destroyed a vinyl fence and two signs at the Islamic Center of Delaware. <sup>61</sup>
61	October 2013	Orlando, FL	A driver tried several times to run a young Muslim mom and her two daughters off the road. <sup>62</sup>
62	December 2013	Princeton, WV	The Islamic Society of the Appalachian Region was spray-painted with anti-Muslim slurs and the terms "666" and "pedophile." <sup>63</sup>
63	January 2014	Manteca, CA	A sign at the Islamic Center of Manteca was spray-painted to say "F*** Islam," and raw bacon was left on the ground at the mosque. Two months prior to this event, the same sign was spray-painted to say "No Allah, Only God." <sup>64</sup>
64	January 2014	Tulsa, OK	A man hit a Lebanese woman in the forehead with a closed fist, slashed her tire with a knife, and called her a "Muslim B****." <sup>65</sup>
65	January 2014	Albany, NY	One man was indicted after he and a second man attempted to create a device that would eradicate "medical waste" [the term the two men used to describe "Muslims"] by administering fatal doses of radiation. <sup>66</sup>
66	February 2014	Waukegan, IL	St. Demetrios Greek Orthodox Christian Church and the Islamic Foundation North were spray-painted with hateful messages targeting their faiths. <sup>67</sup>
67	February 2014	Bothell, WA	Books with anti-Muslim messages were left in the Islamic Center of Bothell's parking lot. The books contained handwritten words, calling Islam a "pagan cult" and "satanic cult." The Islamic Center's flag was also burned earlier that month. <sup>68</sup>
68	February-March 2014	Fort Morgan, CO	Between February and March 2014, ten Muslim refugees' cars were vandalized in Fort Morgan, Colorado. Many cars had smashed windows and others were spray-painted with racial slurs. <sup>69</sup>
69	March 2014	Sacramento, CA	An Iraqi man was shot and killed in a Home Depot parking lot. The shooter had allegedly told family members that he "hated people of Middle Eastern descent because of a business dispute with a South Asian immigrant." <sup>70</sup>
70	March 2014	Stockton, CA	Outside of a Costco, a man called a woman wearing a hijab a "terrorist" before telling her to "go to hell." A little while later, the same man tried to run the woman over in the Costco parking lot and almost hit her. <sup>71</sup>

78	March 2014	Orland Park, IL	A gunshot was fired at the Prayer Center of Orland Park's dome, striking the dome of the mosque and causing debris to fall on congregants during their morning prayer. <sup>72</sup>
79	March 2014	Hattiesburg, MS	Several gunshots were fired at the Islamic Center of Hattiesburg with approximately five bullets shooting through the mosque just before morning prayer. <sup>73</sup>
80	April 2014	Niagara Falls, NY	A Middle Eastern business owner's building was spray-painted with three phrases: "**** you," "Sand *****," and "***** with us now." The day before the building was spray-painted, a skateboarder called the business owner a "sand *****." <sup>74</sup>
81	April 2014	Queens, NY	A man called a fifteen year old Muslim teen a "terrorist" and threatened to kill her after her bag touched the man on a bus. <sup>75</sup>
82	April 2014	Katy, TX	A man was arrested by the Federal Bureau of Investigation after soliciting people on Facebook to rob banks and kill Muslims, saying "Mosques are to be a blast! With three of my guys with FA [fully-automatic] AK's [AK-47 semi-automatic rifles], we will send that white house worthless piece of dirt and his Muslim brotherhood a message they will never forget." The man was arrested on several charges, including possession of explosive materials. <sup>76</sup>
83	May 2014	Columbus, OH	A man working at the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), a Muslim civil rights organization, looked up and saw an unknown man staring at him from his office door. The intruder said he was going to take everyone in the organization down. Ohio members later discovered roofing nails all over the parking lot. <sup>77</sup>

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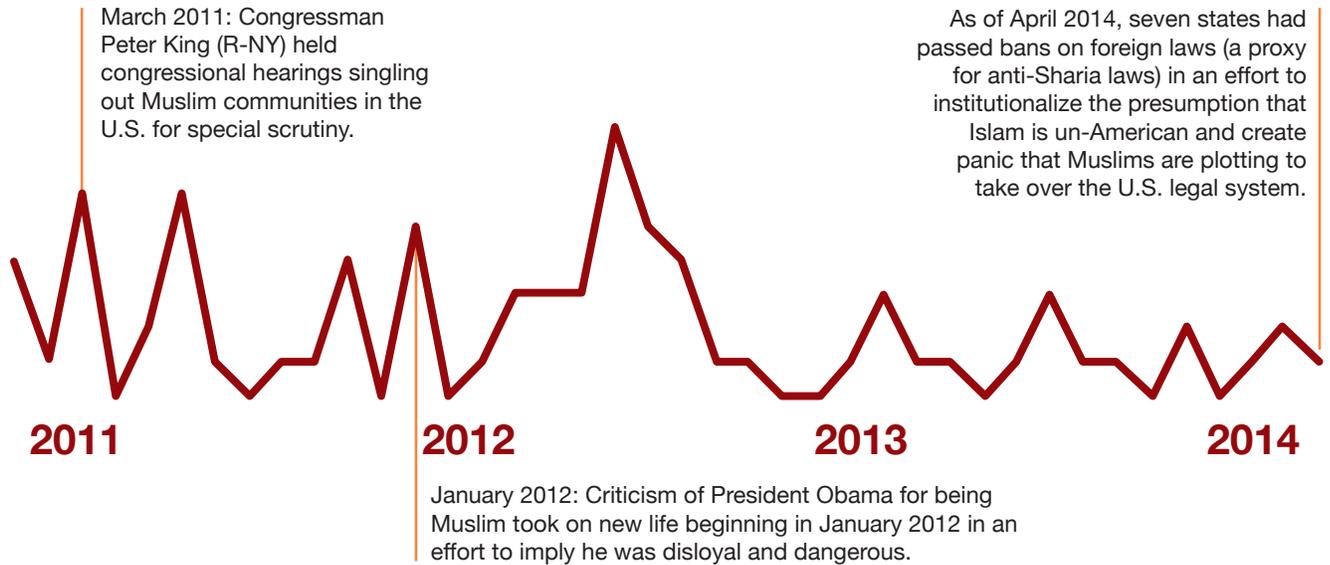
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## Appendix B

### Xenophobic Political Rhetoric Nationwide, January 2011 – April 2014



DATE	LEVEL OF GOVERNMENT	POLITICAL FIGURE	STATEMENT
January 2011	National	Allen West, Member of the U.S. House of Representatives (R-FL)	Rep. West said that Rep. Keith Ellison (D-MN) symbolizes “the antithesis of the principles upon which this country was established,” and claimed that Islam is a “very vile and very vicious enemy that we have allowed to come into this country.” <sup>1</sup>
January 2011	National	Allen West, Member of the U.S. House of Representatives (R-FL)	“One of the critical things that we must come together and understand [is] that there is an infiltration of the Sharia practice into all of our operating systems here in this country as well as we see across Western civilization. So we must be willing to recognize that enemy.” <sup>2</sup>
January 2011	National	Peter King, Member of the U.S. House of Representatives (R-NY)	Rep. King believes that it “seems accurate” to say that “80 percent of mosques in this country are controlled by radical Imams.” <sup>3</sup>
January 2011	National	Peter King, Member of the U.S. House of Representatives (R-NY)	“Despite a person’s ethnic background or religious background, when a war begins, we’re all Americans. But in this case, this is not the situation. And whether it is pressure, whether it’s cultural tradition, or whatever, the fact is the Muslim community does not cooperate [with law enforcement ] anywhere near to the extent that it should.” <sup>4</sup>

DATE	LEVEL OF GOVERNMENT	POLITICAL FIGURE	STATEMENT
February 2011	National	Allen West, Member of the U.S. House of Representatives (R-FL)	When asked in a town hall to point to any verse in the Quran that instructs Muslims to attack Americans, America, and innocent people, Rep. West responded, “Well of course it doesn’t say to attack America, the book was written in the 8th or 9th century or so. America wasn’t even around but you do have verses that talk about killing infidels.” In response to the same man’s statement that West was attacking Islam, West responded: “You attacked us! You attacked us! . . . I went to Muslim countries to defend the freedom of Muslim people! Don’t come up here and try to criticize me! Put the microphone down and go home!” <sup>5</sup>
March 2011	National	Herman Cain, Candidate for U.S. President	When asked “would you be comfortable appointing a Muslim, either in your cabinet or as a federal judge,” Candidate Cain replied, “No, I will not. And here’s why. There is this creeping attempt, there is this attempt to gradually ease Sharia law and the Muslim faith into our government. It does not belong in our government.” <sup>6</sup>
March 2011	National	Herman Cain, Candidate for U.S. President	“And based upon the little knowledge that I have of the Muslim religion, you know, they have an objective to convert all infidels or kill them. Now, I know that there are some peaceful Muslims who don’t go around preaching or practicing that. Well, unfortunately, we can’t sit back and tolerate the radical ones simply because we know that there are some of them who don’t believe in that aspect of the Muslim religion.” <sup>7</sup>
March 2011	National	Rick Santorum, Candidate for U.S. President	“Jihadism is evil and we need to say what it is. We need to define it and say what it is. And it is evil. Sharia law is incompatible with American jurisprudence and our Constitution.” <sup>8</sup>
March 2011	State	Carl Gatto, Member of the Alaska House of Representatives	Rep. Gatto defended anti-“foreign law” legislation in Alaska, saying, “[a]s a kid, we had Italian neighborhoods, Irish neighborhoods . . . but they didn’t impose their own laws. When these neighborhoods are occupied by people from the Middle East, they do establish their own laws.” <sup>9</sup>
March 2011	State	Tim Pawlenty, Governor of Minnesota	Gov. Pawlenty shut down a housing program that he believed accommodated “Sharia law.” Pawlenty’s spokesman offered the following reason for Pawlenty’s action: “The United States should be governed by the U.S. Constitution, not religious laws.” <sup>10</sup>

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March 2011	Local	Deborah Pauly, Villa Park, California Councilwoman	At protest outside an Islamic charity event, Councilwoman Pauly said, “What’s going on over there right now . . . that is pure, unadulterated evil. I know quite a few marines who will be very happy to help these terrorists to an early meeting in paradise.” <sup>11</sup>
May 2011	National	Michele Bachmann, Candidate for U.S. President	After the death of Osama bin Laden, Candidate Bachmann said, “It is my hope that this is the beginning of the end of Shariah-compliant terrorism.” <sup>12</sup>
May 2011	National	Paul Broun, Member of the U.S. House of Representatives (R-GA)	“I walked through [the TSA security line] . . . right behind me there was a grandmother—little old lady, and she was patted down. Right behind her was a little kid who was patted down. And then right behind him was a guy in Arabian dress who just walked right through. Why are we patting down grandma and kids?” <sup>13</sup>
June 2011	National	Newt Gingrich, Candidate for U.S. President	In a GOP debate, Candidate Gingrich made the following remarks when discussing a “loyalty test” requirement for hiring Muslims in his administration: “We did this in dealing with the Nazis. We did this in dealing with the Communists. And it was controversial both times and both times we discovered after a while, you know, there are some genuinely bad people who would like to infiltrate our country. And we have got to have the guts to stand up and say, ‘No.’” <sup>14</sup>
June 2011	National	Herman Cain, Candidate for U.S. President	In an interview, Candidate Cain was asked to clarify a previous statement that he made about appointing Muslims. Cain responded: “The exact language was when I was asked would you be comfortable with a Muslim in your cabinet and I said ‘no’ I would not be comfortable. I didn’t say I wouldn’t appoint one, because if they can prove to me that they can put the Constitution of the United States first then they would be a candidate just like everyone else.”  Cain further explained that he would require an oath of Muslim appointees of his administration, but would not require an oath for people of other religions: “There is a greater dangerous part of the Muslim faith than there is any of these other religions.” <sup>15</sup>
June 2011	National	Herman Cain, Candidate for U.S. President	“I don’t believe in Sharia law in American courts. I believe in American law in American courts. Period.” <sup>16</sup>

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June 2011	National	Lynne Torgerson, Candidate for U.S. House of Representatives	“I, Lynne Torgerson, am running for Congress in Minnesota, against radical Islamist Keith Ellison. Keith Ellison fails to oppose banning Islamic Sharia law in the United States. He accuses people of trying to ban it as “conspiratorilists.” Keith Ellison also fails to support that the United States Constitution should be supreme over Islamic Sharia law.” <sup>17</sup>
June 2011	National	Louie Gohmert, Member of the U.S. House of Representatives (R-TX)	Rep. Gohmert made the following statement on the floor of the House of Representatives: “I know the president made the mistake one day of saying he had visited all 57 states, and I’m well aware that there are not 57 states in this country, although there are 57 members of OIC [Organization of the Islamic Conference], the Islamic states in the world. Perhaps there was some confusion whether he’d been to all 57 Islamic states as opposed to all 50 U.S. states. But nonetheless, we have an obligation to the 50 American states, not the 57 Muslim, Islamic states. Our oath we took is in this body, in this House. And it’s to the people of America. And it’s not to the Muslim Brotherhood, who may very well take over Egypt and once they do, they are bent upon setting up a caliphate around the world, including the United States. And this administration will been [sic] complicit in helping people who wants [sic] to destroy our country.” <sup>18</sup>
June 2011	National	Gabriela Saucedo Mercer, Candidate for U.S. House of Representatives (R-AZ)	“If you know Middle Easterners, a lot of them, they look Mexican or they look, you know, like a lot of people in South America, dark skin, dark hair, brown eyes. And they mix. They mix in. And those people, their only goal in life is to, to cause harm to the United States. So why do we want them here, either legally or illegally? When they come across the border, besides the trash that they leave behind, the drug smuggling, the killings, the beheadings. I mean, you are seeing stuff. It’s a war out there.” <sup>19</sup>
July 2011	National	Herman Cain, Candidate for U.S. President	Candidate Cain expressed concern with plans to build a mosque in Murfreesboro, Tennessee, saying: “It is an infringement and an abuse of our freedom of religion. And I don’t agree with what’s happening, because this isn’t an innocent mosque . . . It is another example of why I believe in American laws and American courts. This is just another way to try to gradually sneak Sharia law into our laws, and I absolutely object to that.” <sup>20</sup>
September 2011	National	Allen West, Member of the U.S. House of Representatives (R-FL)	Rep. West hosted a screening of film showcasing opposition to building of a Muslim community center near Ground Zero in Manhattan. In a press release for the event, West’s office stated the following: “As plans for a mosque move forward at Ground Zero, just steps away from the twin towers site, 9/11 survivors and family members are experiencing yet another type of Islamic jihad.” <sup>21</sup>

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October 2011	National	Herman Cain, Candidate for U.S. President	"I know that there are peaceful Muslims, and there are extremists . . . I have talked with Muslims that are peaceful Muslims. And I have had one very well known Muslim voice say to me directly that a majority of Muslims share the extremist views." <sup>22</sup>
November 2011	National	Michele Bachmann, Candidate for U.S. President	"We surely must realize that [Sharia] would be against our Constitution, because that would usurp, and put Sharia law over the Constitution, and that would be wrong." <sup>23</sup>
November 2011	National	Gary Boisclair, Candidate for U.S. House of Representatives	"Congressman Ellison swore an oath to uphold the Constitution on a Quran. The Quran says Christians and Jews are infidels. The Quran says Christians are blasphemers who should have their hands and feet cut off and that they should be crucified and killed. Do you really want someone representing you who swears an oath on a Quran, a book that undermines our Constitution and says you should be killed?" <sup>24</sup>
November 2011	State	Rick Womick, Member of the Tennessee House of Representatives	"I can't tell who the good Muslim is and who the bad Muslim is. And political correctness is not working. What choice do I have? My solution is, and I guarantee you this will work, you don't let any Muslims serve in the military. You force the Muslim community to get its act together and clean its house and step up and speak out against Sharia law or they're not a part of not only our military but since they want [inaudible] on our constitution, they can go back to where they came from." <sup>25</sup>
November 2011	State	Rick Womick, Member of the Tennessee House of Representatives	"Now you explain to me what is the more radical, we have a whole culture who outright comes out and says we are authorized, we are commanded by a God—a false God—to kill everybody who won't convert . . . absolutely [Allah] is a false God. There's only one God: Jehovah. And the son, Christ Jesus [sic] who died on the Cross. That's my belief, that's my personal belief. Now because I believe that, I have a Fatwa on my head. I will never convert to Islam. Allah is not a real God." <sup>26</sup>
January 2012	National	Newt Gingrich, Candidate for U.S. President	When asked if he would support a Muslim-American running for president, Candidate Gingrich said, "I think it would depend entirely on whether they would commit in public to give up Sharia." <sup>27</sup>
January 2012	National	Rick Santorum, Candidate for U.S. President	"[Equality] doesn't come from Islam. It doesn't come from the East and Eastern religions, where does it come from? It comes from the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, that's where it comes from." <sup>28</sup>

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January 2012	National	Rick Santorum, Candidate for U.S. President	At a town hall, a woman said the following to Candidate Santorum: “[Obama] is an avowed Muslim. Why isn’t something being done to get him out of the government? He has no legal right to be calling himself president.” Santorum responded by saying, “Well, yeah. But I’m doing my best to try to get him out of the government.” <sup>29</sup>
January 2012	State	Judy Manning, Member of Georgia House of Representatives	“I think Mitt Romney is a nice man, but I’m afraid of his Mormon faith. It’s better than a Muslim.” <sup>30</sup>
January 2012	State	David Williams, President of the Kentucky State Senate	Sen. Williams criticized Kentucky Gov. Steve Beshear’s participation in a Hindu groundbreaking ceremony by saying that Beshear was worshipping “false gods” and complaining that “[h]e’s sitting down there with his legs crossed, participating in Hindu prayers with a dot on his forehead with incense burning around him.” Williams further indicated that Hindus should convert to Christianity. <sup>31</sup>
March 2012	National	Newt Gingrich, Candidate for U.S. President	“I have said publicly several times that I believe Obama is a Christian. He went to a Christian Church for over 20 years. He was listening to the sermons. The fact is I take him at his word but I think it is very bizarre that he is desperately concerned to apologize to Muslim religious fanatics while they are killing young Americans while at the same time going to war against the Catholic church and against every right to life Protestant organization in the country. I just think it’s a very strange value system.” <sup>32</sup>
April 2012	National	Sam Aanestad, Candidate for U.S. House of Representatives	“I was asked, do I think [Obama]’s a Muslim, and the answer is yes, that is his background. That is his beginning. Is he a Christian today? There’s no way that you or I can tell that. But his background, his upbringing, his tradition, his holiday observances all come from a Muslim background.” <sup>33</sup>
April 2012	State	Charles Fuqua, Candidate for the Arkansas House of Representatives	“I see no solution to the Muslim problem short of expelling all followers of the religion from the United States.” <sup>34</sup>

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April 2012	State	Mark Mustio, Member of the Pennsylvania House of Representatives	Rep. Mustio inserted the Indian flag behind a photo of his Republican Senate primary opponent D. Raja on campaign materials. Mustio also sent a mailing aimed to stir prejudice of Raja based on his country of origin and used Raja's full given name, Dakshinamurthy, even though Raja does not go by that name in his personal or public life. Mustio also aired a TV ad which states, "Mark Mustio, He's one of us . . ." The Pittsburgh Post-Gazette initially endorsed Mustio, but reversed to endorse Raja after the above incidents, saying, "[t]his breach of decency, this appeal to voters' basic instincts, shows Mark Mustio to be a seriously flawed candidate who will stoop to racism to get elected." <sup>35</sup>
May 2012	National	Rabbi Nachum Shifren, Candidate for U.S. Senate	At a "Get to Know Your Candidates" event, Candidate Shifren made the following proclamation: "I am an Islamophobe, and everything we need to know about Islam, we learned on 9/11. I believe in peace and justice for everybody – but that's not why they're here ... We're getting sucker-punched because we as white – yes, I said it – as white, Christian Americans are being taught that somehow we are to blame for all the problems." <sup>36</sup>
May 2012	State	Phil Bailey, Political Director of the South Carolina Senate Democratic Caucus	Commenting on Gov. Haley's assistance to the Republican primary challenger of a candidate who called Haley a "raghead," Director Bailey tweeted the following: "@nikkihaley is the Sikh Jesus. She can resurrect an unlawful campaign from the dead by simply appearing at a @SCGOP hearing." <sup>37</sup>
May 2012	Local	Larry Smith, Candidate for Sheriff of Smith County, Texas	"As the chief law enforcement officer of Smith County, I will require officers under my command to take a course on the U. S. Constitution. This training will help officers understand the practical application of the principles of our Constitution and why Sharia and international law will never be acceptable substitutes or additions. I will personally fund this vital officer training." <sup>38</sup>
June 2012	National	Peter King, Member of the U.S. House of Representatives (R-NY)	". . . the fact is even though Muslims are 1 percent of the population, almost 90 percent of the terrorist crimes are carried out by the Muslim community. And there are not enough people in the community willing to step forward and speak out against this and cooperate with law enforcement . . . it's so important the NYPD focus on [the Muslim community]. That's why it's important that the NYPD and law enforcement not give into political correctness." <sup>39</sup>

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June 2012	State	Cindy Pugh, Candidate for Minnesota House of Representatives	Candidate Pugh shared a photo on her Facebook page of an adult and child wearing niqab (clothing traditionally worn by some Muslim women and girls that covers the body and face) standing in between two full, black garbage bags to imply a similarity to garbage. The caption read: “Disturbing . . . that women & little girls are OK with dressing like this!!! What will it take for these women to stand up and say, ‘NO’!? Wondering if they will ever do that?!” This photo that Pugh shared was uploaded onto “Proud to be an Infidel,” an anti-Muslim website with the slogan “It’s not Islamophobia when they are really trying to kill you.” <sup>40</sup>
June 2012	State	Kenneth Havard, Member of the Louisiana House of Representatives	Rep. Havard discusses not supporting funding of religious schools because it “will fund Islamic teaching.” He went on to say, “I won’t go back home and explain to my people that I supported this.” <sup>41</sup>
July 2012	National	Michele Bachmann, Candidate for U.S. President	Candidate Bachmann and others accused Hillary Clinton’s longtime aide Huma Abedin’s employment as being a “potential Muslim Brotherhood infiltration” <sup>42</sup>
July 2012	National	Ted Cruz, U.S. Senator (R-TX)	“Sharia law is an enormous problem.” <sup>43</sup>
July 2012	National	Lou Ann Zelenik, Candidate for the U.S. House of Representatives	“I consider 15 percent of Islam a religion, 85 percent political. It’s a total way of life. The only ones who do not call Islam a religion are the Muslims because it’s not a religion.” <sup>44</sup>
July 2012	State	David Storobin, New York State Senator	In response to a proposed mosque, Sen. Storobin stated that it “may pose a danger to public safety.” He further stated, “[t]he opposition isn’t to who is building it, but to what is being built.” <sup>45</sup>
July 2012	State	Williamson County, TN Republican Party	The Williamson County, Tennessee Republican Party condemned Tennessee Gov. Bill Haslam for hiring a Muslim woman, saying in a letter that Haslam has “elevated and/or afforded preferential political status to Sharia adherents in Tennessee.” <sup>46</sup>
July 2012	State	Valarie Hodge, Member of the Louisiana House of Representatives	“I actually support funding for teaching the fundamentals of America’s Founding Fathers’ religion, which is Christianity, in public schools or private schools . . . Unfortunately [the voucher program] will not be limited to the Founders’ religion. We need to insure that it does not open the door to fund radical Islam schools. There are a thousand Muslim schools that have sprung up recently. I do not support using public funds for teaching Islam anywhere here in Louisiana.” <sup>47</sup>

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July 2012	State	Kevin Grantham, Member of the Colorado Senate	“Now, there’s some Muslims, obviously . . . that we would call moderate. But the philosophical underpinnings of that system, of that culture of Islam—those are very serious problems and they are antithetical to the American way.” <sup>48</sup>
July 2012	Local	Wes Harris, Founder and Chairman of the Original North Phoenix Tea Party	“Have you ever read the Quran? I suggest you do so, because anyone that is a Muslim is a threat to this country, and that’s a fact . . . There is no such thing as a moderate Muslim. If they are Muslim they have to follow the Quran. That’s their religion and that’s their doctrine.” <sup>49</sup>
August 2012	National	Jim Gerlach, Member of the U.S. House of Representatives (R-PA)	Candidate Gerlach accused incumbent Candidate Manan Trivedi of being “foreign” to the county in which both men were running for election. A Trivedi campaign spokesman said the following: “There are many other ways to characterize someone who doesn’t live in the community. They’re trying to say he’s a foreigner to this place despite the fact that he was born and raised in this county.” <sup>50</sup>
August 2012	National	Lou Ann Zelenik, Candidate for the U.S. House of Representatives	“I will work to stop the Islamization of our society, and do everything possible to prevent Sharia law from circumventing our laws and our Constitution.” <sup>51</sup>
August 2012	National	Joe Walsh, Member of the U.S. House of Representatives (R-IL)	“One thing I’m sure of is that there are people in this country—there is a radical strain of Islam in this country—it’s not just over there—trying to kill Americans every week. It is a real threat, and it is a threat that is much more at home now than it was after 9/11.” <sup>52</sup>
August 2012	National	Joe Walsh, Member of the U.S. House of Representatives (R-IL)	“Let me be clear, bowing down to political correctness has and will get Americans killed. While the overwhelming majority of Muslim Americans are as peace-loving as everyone else, there are radical Islamists right here in the United States trying to kill Americans and destroy this country.” <sup>53</sup>
August 2012	Local	Tonya Hoeffel, Mayor of Garrett, Indiana	Mayor Hoeffel threw away pamphlets about Sikhism, saying “It’s against my beliefs. This is against Christianity.” <sup>54</sup>
September 2012	National	Diane Black, Member of the U.S. House of Representatives (R-TN)	“I understand the devastation that Shariah law could mean here in our country, and I’m a sponsor of a bill that will once again say that the United States Constitution is our law and that it is the supreme law.” <sup>55</sup>

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September 2012	National	Gabriela Saucedo Mercer, Candidate for U.S. House of Representatives (R-AZ)	Candidate Mercer posted on her Facebook page, “I want to encourage ‘Westerners,’ the whole melting pot that makes this country to educate yourself on Radical Islamist . . .” After Mercer received criticism for this post, Mercer responded, “[h]ow is educating people about things they have no clue about is divisive? Who besides the radical Islamist/Muslims are persecuting Christians around the world? . . . It is not Patriots who love freedom of religion who are waging war against anybody else but terrorists of the Muslim faith.” <sup>56</sup>
September 2012	State	Woody Degan, Candidate for the Tennessee State Senate	“VOTE CONSERVATIVE! VOTE Anti-Sharia, VOTE Against Internet Taxes, Vote FOR Gun Carry Rights! VOTE for your PERSONAL RIGHTS!” <sup>57</sup>
September 2012	State	Debbie Riddle, Member of the Texas House of Representatives	Rep. Riddle responded to an American law student who commented on an anti-Muslim Facebook post of hers with the following: “Abdul, if you are so offended by our soldiers then you don’t need us or our money in Afghanistan. As an American I am greatly offended that we have had American soldiers killed by the very ones we were attempting to train and help — Afghanistan soldiers. Get a grip fellow — if you want to be an American act like one and be proud of our country and stand up for our military. If you can’t do that then go where people are sensitive (sic) enough for you — I guess that would be Afghanistan — where they still live like they are in the Stone Age — but still very sensitive.” <sup>58</sup>
October 2012	National	Randall Terry, Candidate for U.S. President	“A vote for Obama helps Muslims murder Christians and Jews. I’m Randall Terry and I approve this message.” <sup>59</sup>
November 2012	National	Michael McCaul, Member of the U.S. House of Representatives (R-TX)	“The presence of Iran and Hezbollah in Latin America represents a strategic migration to position terrorist operations within striking distance of the United States. It’s not speculation, it’s true they are working with the drug cartels.” <sup>60</sup>
March 2013	State	Aubrey Rimes, Pike County, Mississippi Justice Court Judge	Judge Rimes told a defendant’s attorney that the defendant’s case would be moved to the end of the docket if the defendant did not remove “that rag” (the defendant’s turban). <sup>61</sup>
April 2013	National	Joe Walsh, Former Member of the U.S. House of Representatives (R-IL)	Former Rep. Walsh said the following on the MSNBC show “Martin Bashir”: “We’re at war, and this country got a stark reminder last week again that we’re at war. And not only should we take a pause, Martin, when it comes to our immigration, we need to begin profiling who our enemy is in this war: young Muslim men.” <sup>62</sup>

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April 2013	National	Peter King, Member of the U.S. House of Representatives (R-NY)	“When you go after the Mafia, you go to Italian communities . . . If you’re looking for Islamic terrorism, you focus on Muslim communities. We’re at war with Islamic terrorism. It’s coming from people within the Muslim community by the terrorists coming from that community, just like the Mafia comes from Italian communities.” <sup>63</sup>
April 2013	State	Alan Hays, Florida State Senator	Likening Sharia to contracting a disease, Sen. Hays said, “When you were a child, did your parents have you vaccinated against different diseases? That was a preemptive gesture on their part for which I would hope you’re very thankful. And this is very similar to that. Your mom and dad would not want you to get sick from one of those dreadful diseases, and I don’t want any American to be in a Florida courtroom and have their constitutional rights violated by any foreign law. That’s it. It’s not that complicated.” <sup>64</sup>
May 2013	Local	Barry West, Coffee County, Tennessee Commissioner	Commissioner West posted “HOW TO WINK AT A MUSLIM” on his Facebook page with a picture of a man holding a gun at the camera lens as if he were ready to shoot. West deleted the image about an hour after he had posted it, with his response to the outrage being, “No I did not Twitter this . . . no I did not create this picture . . . yes I shared it . . . so why am I being singled out?” <sup>65</sup>
June 2013	National	Allen West, Former Member of the U.S. House of Representatives (R-FL)	Former Rep. West responded to Bill Cosby’s statement that “we should all be more like Muslims” in a tweet stating: “2day in NY Post, Bill Cosby said we should b more like Muslims. U mean honor killings, beheadings, suicide bombings? Hope ur kidding sir.” <sup>66</sup>
August 2013	National	Liz Cheney, Candidate for U.S. Senate	“I do think that we know that recruitment [for “terror groups”] goes on through mosques” <sup>67</sup>
September 2013	National	Rand Paul, U.S. Senator (R-KY)	Sen. Paul said the following about the Syrian civil war: “If the rebels win, will they be American allies? Assad’s definitely not an American ally, but I’m not convinced anybody on the Islamic side, the Islamic rebels will be American allies.” <sup>68</sup>
September 2013	National	Michele Bachmann, Member of the U.S. House of Representatives (R-MN)	“What’s weird about all of this is if you just objectively look at everyone action that Barack Obama has taken as President of the United States, the fruit of his actions had lifted up the aims and goals of the Muslim Brotherhood and Islamic jihad, and his actions have taken down Israel. Every intelligent [sic] leak, unprecedented intelligence leakers, all have been to the detriment of Israel, almost as if to defend a signal: don’t try to defend yourselves because the United States won’t be there for you.” <sup>69</sup>

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September 2013	National	Rick Santorum, Former Candidate for U.S. President	“You see this president denying any problematic side of what’s going on within the Islamic religion in the Middle East” <sup>70</sup>
October 2013	National	Michele Bachmann, Member of the U.S. House of Representatives (R-MN)	In an interview, Rep. Bachmann said, “[w]e’re seeing this all across America, it’s like groups want to top each other and be the new, latest, largest mosque in North America.” Bachmann further said that many mosques are financed by those “advancing the goals and beliefs of the violent Muslim Brotherhood and that should give us pause . . . The motivation is inspired from religion; it’s from their religion of Islam.” <sup>71</sup>
November 2013	National	Frank Wolf, Member of the U.S. House of Representatives (R-VA)	In an interview, Rep. Wolf said the following when discussing the “real security threat” of “Muslim Brotherhood-affiliated terrorist organizations”: “An example of the depth of the threat comes from the Somali al-Qaida-affiliate al-Shabaab. Imams recruit for al-Shabaab from Somali groups in Minneapolis. Not only that, they’re telling Somalis not to cooperate with federal authorities who are investigating the Somali mosques.” <sup>72</sup>
January 2014	National	Scott DesJarlais, Member of the U.S. House of Representatives (R-TN)	Rep. Desjarlais made a statement on the proposal of a Muslim cemetery in Tennessee: “Friends, I have received numerous calls over the last couple of weeks regarding the Murfreesboro mosque cemetery. Although this is a state issue, I am deeply concerned over the impact it might have on our community.” <sup>73</sup>
January 2014	State	Dave Agema, Michigan Republican National Committeeman	Committeeman Agema posted “Even if you’re not Catholic you may find this eye opening” on his Facebook page while linking to a blog that raised several questions, including: “Have you ever seen a Muslim do anything that contributes positively to the American way of life?” <sup>74</sup>
March 2014	Local	Victoria Jackson, Candidate for Tennessee County Commissioner	“[a reporter] asked me what the difference is between Christian extremists and Muslim extremists, inferring that any extremist is a dangerous one. Well, according to our respective holy books, an Extreme Muslim would memorize the Quran, pray all day, crawl to Mecca on his knees and kill a lot of infidels (non-Muslims) in a suicide bombing. An Extreme Christian would memorize the Bible, pray all day, give away everything, and help Franklin Graham deliver food, water, medicine and Christmas boxes to starving children in third world countries . . . “Islamic terrorists” who are breeding at an alarming rate, want to take over the world and instigate Shariah Law. “Mass Murderer/terrorists” like Harris, Klebold, and Loughner want to make a statement and kill themselves. That’s the difference.” <sup>75</sup>

DATE	LEVEL OF GOVERNMENT	POLITICAL FIGURE	STATEMENT
April 2014	National	Lou Barletta, Member of the U.S. House of Representatives (R-PA)	Rep. Barletta responded to Florida Gov. Jeb Bush's claim that undocumented immigrants come to the U.S. "out of love," by stating the following: "You know, sometimes we need to remind everyone about September 11. The pilots of those planes, it was an act of love to a different God that took American lives. And not everyone who is here illegally is all here for an act of love for their families." <sup>76</sup>
April 2014	State	Kris Kobach, Kansas Secretary of State	Kansas Sec. of State Kris Kobach made the following statement about Sharia law in an interview: "As many of you listeners may know, there is an effort going on below the radar for the most part to insert Sharia law based defenses into court cases . . . a defendant in a spousal abuse case will say that my tradition, my custom of Sharia law justifies the beating etc. and sometimes in some states, county judges, district judges are accepting those defenses and in Kansas, we passed a law that says only American law can be applied in American courts. It doesn't single out Sharia law but it simply says that any foreign law, any foreign legal tradition, that doesn't work in the United States. You look at U.S. law, you look at specifically Kansas law. We have that on our books in Kansas and hope that other states will adopt that, too." <sup>77</sup>
May 2014	State	Tim Donnelly, California Republican Gubernatorial Candidate	Candidate Donnelly posted the following message on his Facebook page regarding his opponent, Neel Kashkari: "BREAKING: Neel Kashkari supported the United States submitting to the Islamic, Shariah banking code in 2008 when he ran TARP. Shariah is 'the seditious religio-political-legal code authoritative Islam seeks to impose worldwide under a global theocracy." <sup>78</sup>

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COMMENTER	CATEGORY	DATE	COMMENT
Barack Obama, U.S. President	Official, Elected	4/15/2013	“We still do not know who did this or why. And people shouldn’t jump to conclusions before we have all the facts. But make no mistake—we will get to the bottom of this. And we will find out who did this; we’ll find out why they did this.” <sup>1</sup>
Barack Obama, U.S. President	Official, Elected	4/19/2013	“When a tragedy like this happens, with public safety at risk and the stakes so high, it’s important that we do this right. That’s why we take care not to rush to judgment—not about the motivations of these individuals, certainly not about entire groups of people . . . One thing we do know is that whatever hateful agenda drove these men to such heinous acts will not—cannot—prevail.” <sup>2</sup>
Michael Capuano, Member of the U.S. House of Representatives (D-MA)	Official, Elected	4/15/2013	“My thoughts and prayers are with those who lost loved ones as a result of the explosions in Boston. Please know that you are not alone in your sorrow. I pray that those who suffered wounds recover fully and I thank our emergency personnel for their efforts today. Like so many others, I have many questions about the events today that cannot yet be answered. However, I do know that we will stand together during this difficult time.” <sup>3</sup>
Marco Rubio, U.S. Senator (R-FL)	Official, Elected	4/15/2013	“My thoughts and prayers are with the victims of today’s bombing at the Boston Marathon, the brave first responders who rushed to the scene to help others and the entire city of Boston. For decades, the Boston Marathon has brought together people from all over the world in the pursuit of athletic excellence, a sense of accomplishment and to raise money for many worthy causes. I am disturbed and saddened that anyone would ruin this day of celebration by targeting innocent people and murdering them in cold blood. Once it is determined who is responsible, justice must be served to the fullest extent possible.” <sup>4</sup>
Deval Patrick, Governor of Massachusetts	Official, Elected	4/16/2013	“These are times when all kinds of forces sometimes conspire to make people start to think of categories of people in sometimes uncharitable ways. This community will recover and will heal if we turn to each other rather than on each other. And one of the things that we’ll emphasize at the interfaith service and we want to emphasize by our example every day is that we are one community, as the mayor said, we are all in this together, and the sensitivity we show to each other as we heal will be an important part of how we heal.” <sup>5</sup>

COMMENTS	COMMENTS	COMMENTS	COMMENTS	COMMENTS
Elizabeth Warren, U.S. Senator (D-MA)	Official, Elected	4/16/2013	“During the marathon, we are one family. We cheer for each other, we carry each other across the finish lines. And when tragedy strikes, we are also one family. We hurt together, we help each other together.” <sup>6</sup>	
Michael Enzi, U.S. Senator (R-WY)	Official, Elected	4/16/2013	“Diana and I were heartbroken to learn of the bombings in Boston yesterday. Our prayers are with the victims and the families of those whose lives will never be the same. This is a sad reminder that we live in a dangerous world. We must remain vigilant against those who wish to do us harm. We hope to learn more about those who carried out this cowardly attack in the days to come. Through it all we must never forget that we are all Americans and we are in this together.” <sup>7</sup>	
Spencer Bachus, Member of the U.S. House of Representatives (R-AL)	Official, Elected	4/16/2013	“The House of Representatives held a moment of prayer tonight for the victims of this senseless bombing at a sporting event that brings such joy to its participants and to the family members and spectators who line [sic] the streets of Boston to watch the race. There is much that we do not know this evening, but we know that the person or persons who carried out this terrible act must be held fully accountable under the law. As Americans, we come together at times like this to show our support for those who have suffered personal losses and to demonstrate our resolve as a society against actions designed to spread fear and [harm] the innocent.” <sup>8</sup>	
Marco Rubio, U.S. Senator (R-FL)	Official, Elected	4/16/2013	“We should really be very cautious about using language that links [immigrants and the Boston bombing] in any way. We know very little about Boston other than that it was obviously an act of terror. We don’t know who carried it out or why they carried it out, and I would caution everyone to be very careful about linking the two.” <sup>9</sup>	
Adam Schiff, Member of the U.S. House of Representatives (D-CA)	Official, Elected	4/16/2013	“[Americans share a determination] to keep this country an open and secure society. We will know much more in the coming hours and days about whether this was a home-grown plot, the product of self-radicalization, or a foreign driven attack. In the meantime, I will be working to make sure the intelligence community provides all necessary support to the investigation.” <sup>10</sup>	
Hillary Clinton, Former U.S. Senator and Former U.S. Secretary of State	Elected & Appointed Official, Former	4/17/2013	“I’ve been obsessed the last few days as I’m sure a number of you have been about the terrible violence and loss of life and injury in Boston. Like so many Americans and those watching around the world, we saw ordinary citizens alongside first responders rushing into danger to help. It was a tragic terrible day, but it seemed to exemplify what Patriots Day really means, because we do better when we work together. Women and men, all of us across every line that is used to divide us.” <sup>11</sup>	

COMMENTER	CATEGORY	DATE	COMMENT
Keith Ellison, Member of the U.S. House of Representatives (D-MN)	Official, Elected	4/18/2013	"I think everyone needs to take a page from what President Obama said, which is to calm down and not jump to conclusions. Certainly you're not helping any of the Boston victims by jumping on somebody just because of their religion or what they're wearing." <sup>12</sup>
John Kerry, U.S. Secretary of State	Official, Appointed	4/18/2013	"As Secretary of State, I would underscore that this attack on America was also an attack on people everywhere, as the Boston Marathon has always been an international event that brings countries and peoples closer together. We share in the tragic loss of one young Chinese citizen killed that awful day, and all foreign nationals who have been injured. State Department officials have been in contact with the Chinese victim's family in China, China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Chinese officials in the United States, to convey our condolences and offer our assistance. We stand ready to provide whatever appropriate assistance we can to the family members of foreign nationals in the aftermath of this despicable act of terror." <sup>13</sup>
Keith Ellison, Member of the U.S. House of Representatives (D-MN)	Official, Elected	4/22/2013	"The fact is if you were to ask American Muslims, where is Chechnya on the map, most of us would never know. We would have to find a map and look for it. But so you're talking to people who know literally nothing about the conflict these individuals may be motivated by. So it is just, one thing it does, is it targets people unfairly, but it wastes valuable resources. We need to channel resources where they are most needed, which is on behavior." <sup>14</sup>
Sonia Sotomayor, Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States	Official, Appointed	5/2/2013	With respect to law enforcement who use profiling as a strategy, ". . . you're going to be wrong most of the time. Because that's not the way the world works." <sup>15</sup>
Richard DesLauriers, Special Agent in Charge of the FBI Boston Division	Law Enforcement	4/16/2013	"Regarding who might be suspected of this event, the investigation is in its infancy. As law enforcement, it's our responsibility to thoroughly review each and every piece of evidence. Some of our activity you may see, some of it you won't—but rest assured, we are working hard to get the answers. At this time, there are no claims of responsibility. The range of suspects and motives remains wide-open. Importantly, the person who did this is someone's friend, neighbor, coworker, or relative. We are asking anyone who may have heard someone speak about the marathon or the date of April 15 in any way that indicated he or she may target the event to call us. Someone knows who did this." <sup>16</sup>

COMMENTS	DATE	COMMENTS
<p>Richard DesLauriers, Special Agent in Charge of the FBI Boston Division</p>	<p>4/16/2013</p>	<p>“Cooperation from the community will play a crucial role in this investigation. We ask that businesses review and preserve surveillance video and other business records in their original form. And we are asking the public remain alert and to alert us to the following activity: An individual who expressed a desire to target the marathon; Suspicious interest in researching how to create explosive device; The noise of explosions in remote areas prior to yesterday which may have been used as tests by those responsible; Someone who appeared to be carrying an unusually heavy, dark-colored bag yesterday around the time of the blasts and in the vicinity of the blasts.”<sup>17</sup></p>
<p>Greg Comcowich, FBI Special Agent</p>	<p>4/17/2013</p>	<p>“Contrary to widespread reporting, no arrest has been made in connection with the Boston Marathon attack. Over the past day and a half, there have been a number of press reports based on information from unofficial sources that has been inaccurate. Since these stories often have unintended consequences, we ask the media, particularly at this early stage of the investigation, to exercise caution and attempt to verify information through appropriate official channels before reporting.”<sup>18</sup></p>
<p>Richard DesLauriers, Special Agent in Charge of the FBI Boston Division</p>	<p>4/18/2013</p>	<p>“Today, we are enlisting the public’s help to identify the two suspects. After a very detailed analysis of photo, video, and other evidence, we are releasing photos of the two suspects. They are identified as Suspect 1 and Suspect 2. They appear to be associated. Suspect 1 is wearing a black hat. Suspect 2 is wearing a white hat. Suspect 2 set down a back pack at the site of the second explosion just in front of the Forum Restaurant. We strongly encourage those who were at the Forum Restaurant who have not contacted us yet to do so. As you can see from one of the images, Suspects 1 and 2 appear to be walking together through the marathon crowd on Boylston Street in the direction of the finish line. That image was captured as they walked on Boylston in the vicinity of its intersection with Gloucester Street. As you can see, the quality of the photos is quite good, but we will continue to work on developing additional images to improve their identification.”<sup>19</sup></p>
<p>Richard DesLauriers, Special Agent in Charge of the FBI Boston Division</p>	<p>4/18/2013</p>	<p>“For clarity, these images should be the only ones—the only ones—that the public should view to assist us. Other photos should not be deemed credible and unnecessarily divert the public’s attention in the wrong direction and create undue work for vital law enforcement resources.”<sup>20</sup></p>

COMMENTER	CATEGORY	DATE	COMMENT
Todd McGhee, Former Massachusetts State Police Officer and Cofounder of Security Firm Protecting the Homeland Innovations.	Law Enforcement, Former	4/19/2013	“No religion and no culture or ethnicity has a monopoly on terrorism.” <sup>21</sup>
Todd McGhee, Former Massachusetts State Police Officer and Cofounder of Security Firm Protecting the Homeland Innovations.	Law Enforcement, Former	4/19/2013	“That preconceived bias was stunted, because you didn’t know their background, you didn’t know their religious affiliation. It doesn’t matter if you’re from a foreign nation, or grew up on Main Street in Boston, Mass. As you looked at the [photos], all you could have said is that they were two men. You could confirm gender, and they were lighter-skinned . . . The public is better served by being aware of factors such as unusual behavior or anomalies in something as simple as how someone is walking to whether they are overdressed for an event (as the Tsarnaev brothers appeared to be).” <sup>22</sup>
Juliette Kayyem, Boston Globe	Media	4/16/2013	“Until definitive information emerges, it’s pointless to speculate on who did or didn’t do this. The Oklahoma City bombing was first blamed on men dressed in ‘Arab garb.’ The thirst for a quick and easy explanation leads everyone astray.” <sup>23</sup>
Erik Wemple, Washington Post	Media	4/17/2013	“. . . ‘dark-skinned male’ is useless information that borders on inflammatory.” <sup>24</sup>
Gwen Ifill, PBS Newshour	Media	4/17/2013	“Disturbing that it’s OK for TV to ID a Boston bombing suspect only as ‘a dark-skinned individual.’” <sup>25</sup>
Aidan White	Media	4/18/2013	“It soon became clear, however, that the injured student with chunks of shrapnel in his leg was a witness (and a victim), not a suspect. Critics quickly called for the [New York] Post to apologize for labeling him a potential terrorist.” <sup>26</sup>
Al Sharpton, MSNBC	Media	4/18/2013	With reference to CNN reporter John King’s comments that the perpetrator of the Boston bombings was a “dark-skinned male”: “These comments are very offensive. They have no place in our discourse. What King’s words did is to make every dark-skinned male in Boston a suspect, and that’s shameful.” <sup>27</sup>

COMMENTER	CATEGORY	DATE	COMMENT
Al Thompkins, The Poynter Institute's Senior Faculty for Broadcasting and Online	Media	4/18/2013	"We can cause great harm to individuals and to the investigation when we suggest people are suspects and when we show images with red circles around the people, making them appear to be targets. In addition to the harm that comes to an individual, there is harm to the investigation in that the public begins to believe authorities know who they are looking for, and there is no need to help further." <sup>28</sup>
Amanda Terkel, Huffington Post	Media	4/18/2013	"It may turn out that the Boston Marathon bombers are Arab. But they could also be white, black, Native American, Asian or Hispanic. While CBS News tweeted Wednesday that a 'white male' was a possible suspect, most people subjected to the speculation grinder have been non-white—all before the FBI on Thursday released photos of two racially ambiguous suspects." <sup>29</sup>
Amy Davidson, The New Yorker	Media	4/18/2013	"These men look young. They seem to have darkish hair, but neither is wearing a T-shirt saying where he or his family is from. These are still nameless men sought in a murder and mass bombing. They are still strangers—but not, the F.B.I. is hoping, to everybody." <sup>30</sup>
Chris Hayes, MSNBC	Media	4/18/2013	"Just explain to me what news value exists in the adjective dark-skinned. What exactly is newsworthy that is communicated in that phrase? . . . That phrase is not there to convey journalistic information. What dark-skinned actually communicates with a wink and a nod is, 'aha! All you folks who thought it was a bad Muslim who did this, you nailed it.'" <sup>31</sup>
New York Times	Media	4/18/2013	"On Twitter, the reaction to the release of images and video of the suspects in the Boston Marathon bombings was immediate. Several people noted that the ethnicity of the two men was hard to discern and that they were very young." <sup>32</sup>
Chris Lawrence, CNN Pentagon Respondent	Media	4/19/2013	"We heard from the uncle who gave us a really good background on where these guys grew up and the family. And very important to separate them from the family. Say this is not about where we come from. It's not about our faith. These men are a disgrace. This is a shame. The suspect should turn himself in. And very important, in terms of as we continue to pursue motivation here, it is just as likely, at this point, that these two men just decided to become crazed killers as it is that they're connected to any larger ideal." <sup>33</sup>

COMMENTER	CATEGORY	DATE	COMMENT
Elahe Izadi	Media	4/19/2013	“[It was] Photographs and police work, not racial-profiling by the public, that led to the bombing suspects.” <sup>34</sup>
Elahe Izadi	Media	4/19/2013	“It wasn’t until Thursday afternoon that law-enforcement officials released photos of the suspects. Many took to Twitter to proclaim they were white men. But identifying someone’s race is difficult, even with a photo . . . federal and Massachusetts authorities have not encouraged racial profiling in how they’ve handled the case; they simply released photos once they had them.” <sup>35</sup>
Eric Deggans	Media	4/19/2013	“But King’s reporting blunder revealed two important facts about the modern reporting environment. First, there is enough diversity in America that providing a criminal suspects presumed skin color is really no help at all in finding the culprit. And it is not enough, in such heated circumstances, for journalists to accurately report what law enforcement thinks at the time. They have to be careful not to pass along law enforcement’s mistakes as cold facts.” <sup>36</sup>
Megan Garber, The Atlantic	Media	4/19/2013	“But it’s that kind of conversion process—people into People—that led, this week, to the public fears that the bombers would turn out to be Muslim. It’s the process that led, two days ago, to headlines like ‘In Boston Bombing, Muslims Hold Their Breath’ and ‘For Muslim Americans, Boston Bombings Bring Added Anxiety’—and that led, this morning, to stories about Muslim leaders now ‘fearing a backlash.’ The sad assumption carried in these reports is that Americans lack the intellectual equipment and moral imagination to tell the difference between an individual and a group. It’s an assumption that has, in the past, occasionally proven valid.” <sup>37</sup>
John King, CNN	Media	4/23/2013	Acknowledging that he made a mistake by saying on-air that police were looking for a “dark-skinned male,” John King said, “I’ve got a pretty good track record, but when you do something like this it’s embarrassing . . . beyond being personally embarrassing, it’s tough for your viewers, who you want to trust you. So the one thing you do have to do is look in the camera and say, ‘We were wrong,’ and try to explain why we were wrong.” <sup>38</sup>
Clarence Page	Media	4/24/2013	“Some media found the possibility that foreign terrorists bombed the Boston Marathon to be too tantalizing of an explanation to pass up, even when it snares the wrong suspects. On the day of the Boston Marathon bombings, for example, the New York Post proudly presented a scoop that misidentified an injured ‘Saudi national’ as a terror suspect. By the next day, authorities confirmed that the badly burned man actually was a witness, not a suspect.” <sup>39</sup>

COMMENTER	CATEGORY	DATE	COMMENT
Clarence Page	Media	4/24/2013	“As an African-American I, too, understand the burden of guilt by association. I took no consolation when the focus of racial-profiling discussions, a hot issue in the 2000 presidential primaries, suddenly shifted after Sept. 11, 2001, from ‘driving while black’ or Latino to anyone who looked as though he or she might be Arab or Muslim.” <sup>40</sup>
Clarence Page	Media	4/24/2013	“As the facts unfold, the backgrounds of the Boston bombing brother suspects frustrate our usual narratives and stereotypes. They’re foreign-born, but domestically raised without obvious ties to terror groups. We need to get past everyone’s hurt feelings to have a serious conversation about how we deal with all forms of threats to our national security.” <sup>41</sup>
Clarence Page	Media	4/24/2013	“The meteoric rise of new Internet media has created a new and dangerous rise of send-before-you-think journalism, especially in do-it-yourself media circles. That puts a greater burden on news consumers to be skeptical regarding how and what they are being served. Unfortunately, it also can create real dangers to individual lives, social dialogue and even national security. For example, in a New York Times essay a day after the Boston bombings, Haider Javed Warraich, a medical resident in Boston, gave this explanation for why he decided against running into the action: As ‘a 20-something Pakistani male with dark stubble’ owing to his hectic schedule in an intensive-care unit, he wrote, ‘I look like Hollywood’s favorite post-Cold-War movie villain.’” <sup>42</sup>
Al Sharpton, MSNBC	Media	4/26/2013	“After the catastrophic Boston marathon bombings, we must take great measure in making sure that in our diligent pursuit of all responsible parties, we do not begin down a slippery slope of profiling and demonizing entire groups, religions or ethnicities. Profiling based on race or religious affiliation is not only immoral and unproductive, but it also gives more power to those wrongdoers that fall outside of the profile. As I’ve echoed for decades, these kinds of dangerous practices criminalize the innocent and rarely solve crime itself, or prevent the actual criminals. Profiling will only help the terrorists.” <sup>43</sup>

COMMENTER	CATEGORY	DATE	COMMENT
Al Sharpton, MSNBC	Media	4/26/2013	“Last week, John King from CNN made a comment about searching for a ‘dark-skinned male’ as the hunt for the bomber(s) was under way. What his words did was to make every dark-skinned male in the Boston area and beyond suspect and vulnerable to being profiled, stopped, searched, arrested or worse. The <i>New York Post</i> splashed pictures of the wrong men on the front pages of its paper and accused them of being responsible for the attacks. In all the emotion of the moment, we need to take steps to make sure we are not profiling and harassing all dark-skinned men going forward, or all people of a particular religion, while the real offenders slip under the radar.” <sup>44</sup>
Jared Keller, Director of Social Media for Bloomberg News and <i>Bloomberg Businessweek</i> .	Media	4/26/2013	“In the early hours of Friday, April 19, the Boston Police changed its approach to the medium. Rather than simply post updates, it moved to counteract the false claims that were spreading across social networks. The online news ecosystem was in the midst of a misinformation disaster, with rumors gleaned from the official police scanner and from inaccurate sources on major TV networks: A missing Brown student had been identified, inaccurately, as one of the suspects, and confusion reigned over the number of suspects involved in the massive manhunt.” <sup>45</sup>
Kevin Gosztola	Media	4/29/2013	“There is no ‘religious conveyor belt’ where a person, like a Muslim, goes from a peaceful law-abiding citizen or resident of the United States to one, who is committed to violence against America.” <sup>46</sup>
Lisa Wangsness	Media	4/17/2014	“. . . [after the Boston bombing] many Muslims said improved interfaith cooperation and increasingly diverse schools and workplaces contributed to a change in tone. It also seemed, they said, that their non-Muslim neighbors had grown more knowledgeable and less fearful in a dozen years of discussing terrorism, war, national security, and religious liberty in the public square.” <sup>47</sup>
Dara Sharif, DiversityInc.com	Media	No Date	“. . . even entertaining the idea of treating whole groups of people differently simply because of the bad actions of a few is discriminatory at its core . . . fear of the ‘other’ should never be used to justify unequal treatment of people based on religion, race, creed or some other class.” <sup>48</sup>

COMMENTER	CATEGORY	DATE	COMMENT
Islamic Society of North America; Massachusetts General Hospital; Sheriff of Los Angeles County; Police Chief of Dearborn; Hindu American Seva Charities; Lone Star Intelligence; United Clergy and Police Training Program; Sikh American Legal Defense and Education Fund; Muslim Public Affairs Council; The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints	Joint Statement from Organizations and Law Enforcement	4/18/2013	“Today, we declare to redouble our efforts to end the scourge of terrorism, to defeat this plague. We know that we can only succeed as a united front. We can only succeed as we stand firmly behind our President and in partnership with law enforcement. We dedicate our lives to the security of our nation, our world, and humanity. It is a matter of our Sacred Honor.” <sup>49</sup>
Imam Mohamed Magid, Islamic Society of North America President	Leader, Organization, or Institution	4/15/2013	“I applaud the Islamic Society of Boston Cultural Center for its immediate offer to provide on-site volunteers, blood donors, and counseling services to all those in need . . . As American Muslims, we should all do our part to help in any way we can. I urge anyone who is able to please lend a helping hand or offer prayers for those affected by the tragedy.” <sup>50</sup>
Council on American Islamic Relations	Leader, Organization, or Institution	4/15/2013	“American Muslims, like Americans of all backgrounds, condemn in the strongest possible terms today’s cowardly bomb attack on participants and spectators of the Boston Marathon. We urge people of all faiths to pray for the victims and their loved ones and for the speedy recovery of those injured. We also call for the swift apprehension and punishment of the perpetrators. While spiritual measures can serve to comfort those in physical and emotional pain, we also call on Muslims and others in the Boston area to donate blood through the Red Cross as a concrete show of support for the bomb attack victims. Those who were participating in the marathon or were watching the event should contact authorities with any potential eyewitness information they may have.” <sup>51</sup>
Islamic Society of North America	Leader, Organization, or Institution	4/15/2013	“ISNA is shocked and saddened to hear about the blasts at the Boston Marathon this afternoon. Our prayers are with the victims and their loved ones. We are especially saddened to hear that at least three people have been killed, including an 8 year old.” <sup>52</sup>

COMMENTER	CATEGORY	DATE	COMMENT
National Association of Black Journalists	Leader, Organization, or Institution	4/17/2013	“There have been various reports identifying a potential suspect as ‘a dark-skinned individual’. This terminology is not only offensive, but also offers an incomplete picture of relevant facts about the potential person of interest’s identity. When conveying information for the public good, and which can help law enforcement with the help of a vigilant public to keep the country safe, it’s important that such facts be put into proper context. NABJ in no way encourages censorship but does encourage news organizations to be responsible when reporting about race, to report on race only when relevant and a vital part of a story. Ultimately this helps to avoid mischaracterizations which might encourage potential bias or discrimination against a person or a group of people based on race or ethnicity.” <sup>53</sup>
Islamic Society of North America	Leader, Organization, or Institution	4/18/2013	“The Islamic Society of North America (ISNA) and other Muslim organizations join in solidarity with the Boston community during this difficult time. As many people are looking for a way to help, ISNA, the Muslim Public Affairs Council, and the Council on American-Islamic Relations are pleased to announce the ‘Boston Solidarity Fund’ created to assist the victims of the terrible tragedy in Boston. The Boston authorities have also created a fund for the victims and ISNA encourages everyone to contribute . . . May God reward you for helping your fellow citizens.” <sup>54</sup>
Imam Benjamin Abdul-Haqq, Masjid Muhammad Mosque in Washington	Leader, Organization, or Institution	4/19/2013	“These are acts of crime, not acts of religion.” <sup>55</sup>
Imam William Suhaib Webb of the Islamic Society of Boston Cultural Center in Roxbury	Leader, Organization, or Institution	4/19/2013	In reference to the perpetrators, Imam Suhaib Webb said, “We don’t see these people as community members; we see these people as criminals and as enemies of our society.” <sup>56</sup>
Imam William Suhaib Webb of the Islamic Society of Boston Cultural Center in Roxbury	Leader, Organization, or Institution	4/19/2013	“This Friday is not a normal Friday. I am deeply saddened and shocked by the recent events. Our city’s peace was taken away in a blink of an eye. Our faith is once again being called to suspicion. Innocent people are being hurt. What is needed now is meeting hate with love, trials with patience and fear with increased worship. Each and every one of us needs to be a shelter in this storm. God has chosen the Boston community to be the focus, because our community is an excellent one. Our track record speaks volumes to the dedication we have to our city, our heart, Boston. Do not fear and do not waiver, for God stands with this community! Face the coming days with a sense of pride and altruism, that will grant you the dignity to swallow the pills of the shallow minded, the heart to continue to give and support our city.” <sup>57</sup>

COMMENTS	DATE	COMMENTER	CATEGORY	COMMENT
	4/19/2013	Islamic Society of North America	Leader, Organization, or Institution	“As American Muslims, we were shocked and saddened by the attacks and heartened by the faithful efforts of all these heroes. Any attack on one American, on one human being, is an attack on us all, and we all stood together on Monday and will continue to stand together as these difficult developments unfold . . . As Americans of all faiths we believe that no matter the motivation for these terrorist attacks, they will never represent the values or ideals of any religious or ethnic group.” <sup>58</sup>
	4/19/2013	Rev. Dr. C. Welton Gaddy, Interfaith Alliance President	Leader, Organization, or Institution	“Unfortunately, in the last few days too many members of the media have engaged in conjecture based on stereotypes and grainy photos. They have assumed motive based on skin color and ethnic origin. This shoddy reporting has resulted in innocent bystanders being implicated in crimes they had nothing to do with, where they were in fact as much victims as anyone else. Sadly, we have also already heard reports of innocent individuals who are or ‘look’ Muslim being accosted and attacked in the streets . . . The actions of the sick individuals behind this terrorist attack have already devastated the lives of far too many people. We cannot allow them to cause further damage by letting their actions inspire hatred and violence against Muslims, other religious minorities, and people presumed to belong to these maligned minority groups. That kind of collective punishment goes against everything we stand for as Americans.” <sup>59</sup>
	4/19/2013	Yusufi Vali, Executive Director for the Islamic Society of Boston Cultural Center	Leader, Organization, or Institution	“I don’t care who or what these criminals claim to be, but I can never recognize these criminals as part of my city or my faith community. All of us Bostonians want these criminals to be brought to justice immediately. I am infuriated at the criminals of these bombings for trying to rip our city apart.” <sup>60</sup>
	4/20/2013	Imam William Suhaib Webb of the Islamic Society of Boston Cultural Center in Roxbury	Leader, Organization, or Institution	“Details emerged yesterday that both these suspects had been known to our Boston Community - to our public schools, to their local boxing club, to one of our faith communities at the Cambridge mosque, and even to the FBI. Yet, no one inside of these institutions was able to predict these acts of terror by the alleged suspects. This hurts, and we wish we all - our faith community and all the institutions listed above - could have done something to prevent this. Presently, our focus will remain on grieving for the victims and their families, praying for a speedy recovery for the injured, and leaving no stone uncovered in finding any other suspects connected to the bombings. We once again emphatically urge any of our congregants who have any additional information on the Boston bombings or the suspects to immediately call 1800 CALL-FBI.” <sup>61</sup>

COMMENTER	CATEGORY	DATE	COMMENT
Islamic Society of Boston	Leader, Organization, or Institution	4/20/2013	“Right now, our focus will remain on grieving for the victims and their families, praying for a speedy recovery for the injured, and offering what support we can to all in need.” <sup>62</sup>
Islamic Society of Boston Cultural Center	Leader, Organization, or Institution	4/20/2013	“As the sun rises again on Boston this morning, let us ensure that these acts of terror do not destroy Boston’s spirit of unity, compassion, and pulling together highlighted in President Obama’s speech last night. It is this spirit that allowed us to weather the storm that we all faced this week and it’s that unity that will guide us moving forward.” <sup>63</sup>
Cardinal Sean O’Malley	Leader, Organization, or Institution	4/21/2013	“The crimes of the two young men must not be the justification for prejudice against Muslims and against immigrants.” <sup>64</sup>
Islamic Society of Boston	Leader, Organization, or Institution	4/22/2013	“What we do know, as the details related below will show, was that one suspect disagreed with the moderate American-Islamic theology of the ISB Cambridge [sic] mosque. Our mosque is one filled with attendees who are teachers, businessmen, doctors, and lawyers, all of whom are committed to the public good. While these suspects did express views counter to our mosque’s philosophy, they never expressed any hint of violent sentiments or behavior. If they had, the FBI would have immediately been called. We continue to urge all of our congregants to call 1-800-CALL-FBI if they have any further information about these suspects.” <sup>65</sup>
Rabbi Marc Schneier, President of The Foundation for Ethnic Understanding	Leader, Organization, or Institution	4/23/2013	“Let us not hand a victory to the perpetrators of the Boston attacks and those who inspired their actions by wrongfully targeting innocent Americans who happen to be Muslim. Rather, we must stand united to uphold, even in the face of mindless violence, the vision of a tolerant and pluralistic America where people of all backgrounds and faiths are equally entitled to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.” <sup>66</sup>
Rabbi Marc Schneier, President of The Foundation for Ethnic Understanding	Leader, Organization, or Institution	4/23/2013	“At this sensitive time when there is ample reason for concern that increase incitement and even violent hate crimes might be directed against Muslims across the country in supposed retaliation for the Boston bombings, Americans of all faiths and backgrounds should reach out to Muslim friends and neighbors to let them know we are with them. Expressions of support from larger and more diverse allies can mitigate the likelihood that Muslims will be targeted. We also need to caution our public officials and media personalities of the need to avoid making inflammatory statements that demonize the entire Muslim community and might incite bigots or unstable people to attack Muslims.” <sup>67</sup>

COMMENTER	CATEGORY	DATE	COMMENT
Rabbi Victor Reinstein	Leader, Organization, or Institution	4/27/2013	“It was clear how much the people in the Muslim community were hurting, beyond the hurt we and all of us were feeling over the horror of the tragedy. In the midst of their own grief, they were beset upon and pointed at.” <sup>68</sup>
Muslim Public Affairs Council	Leader, Organization, or Institution	4/28/2013	“The Muslim Public Affairs Council expresses its condolences for all those in Boston and with the families and loved ones of the two victims and at least 100 injured from the explosions . . . MPAC condemns this terrorist attack; this is a horrible crime, and we call on all of us as Americans to work together to bring those responsible to justice. The Boston Marathon is an annual, historic event with more than 28,000 people participating from all around the world. To attack those on what is supposed to be a day of jubilation is criminal and inexcusable.” <sup>69</sup>

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6930 Carroll Avenue, Suite 506 | Takoma Park, MD 20912  
Phone: 301-270-1855 | Fax: 301-270-1882 | Email: [info@saalt.org](mailto:info@saalt.org)  
[www.saalt.org](http://www.saalt.org)