

**Assembly Joint Resolution**

**No. 39**

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**Introduced by Assembly Member Levine**

**(Coauthors: Assembly Members Achadjian, Alejo, Arambula, Atkins, Bloom, Bonilla, Bonta, Brown, Burke, Calderon, Campos, Chau, Chiu, Chu, Cooley, Cooper, Dababneh, Daly, Dodd, Eggman, Cristina Garcia, Gatto, Gipson, Gomez, Gonzalez, Gray, Roger Hernández, Holden, Jones-Sawyer, Lopez, Medina, Mullin, Nazarian, Quirk, Ridley-Thomas, Rodriguez, Salas, Santiago, Mark Stone, Ting, and Weber)**

**(Coauthors: Senators Allen and Block)**

May 19, 2016

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Assembly Joint Resolution No. 39—Relative to Muslim Americans.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AJR 39, as introduced, Levine. Muslim Americans.

This measure would commend Muslim Americans for their economic, political, and cultural impact on California and the United States.

This measure would call upon Members of the United States Congress to respect the First Amendment, and to speak out against and reject efforts to monitor mosques, efforts to police and profile Muslim Americans, and efforts to prohibit Muslims from immigrating to the United States, and to speak out against and reject any efforts to pursue an immigration policy based on religion.

Fiscal committee: no.

- 1 WHEREAS, Approximately 3 million Muslim Americans live
- 2 in the United States, with more than 1 million in California. As
- 3 the fastest-growing religion in America, by the year 2050, the

1 number of Muslim Americans is projected to more than double.  
2 California has the largest Muslim American community in the  
3 United States; and

4 WHEREAS, Famous Muslim Americans have been very  
5 successful in a variety of fields. Examples include: legendary  
6 boxer, Muhammad Ali; civil rights activist, Malcolm X; American  
7 journalist for the Washington Post, Fareed Zakaria; retired NBA  
8 basketball champion, Shaquille O’Neal; surgeon, author, and  
9 television personality, Dr. Mehmet Oz; comedian and author, Aziz  
10 Ansari; Chairman of Ethan Allen, Inc., Farooq Kathwari; CEO of  
11 AST Research, Inc., and Professor at University of California  
12 Irvine, Safi Qureshey; and designer of the Willis (formerly Sears)  
13 Tower and the John Hancock Center in Chicago, Fazlur Rahman  
14 Khan; and

15 WHEREAS, Muslim Americans work in various careers in  
16 commerce, public service, arts, the military, science, sports, and  
17 academia and have impacted the United States in practically every  
18 profession. They enrich political, cultural, and economic life in  
19 California and in the United States; and

20 WHEREAS, Muslim Americans come from many different  
21 political, racial, socioeconomic, and ethnic backgrounds. Muslim  
22 Americans have come to the United States from more than 80  
23 countries. Muslims have suffered through poverty, violence, wars,  
24 and ethnic and religious persecution, causing them to seek refuge  
25 in the United States where they can practice their religion freely;  
26 and

27 WHEREAS, The history of Muslims in America goes back more  
28 than 400 years. During the 17th century, many of the slaves brought  
29 to America were Muslims. There is evidence that suggests that  
30 Muslims came to the Americas with Christopher Columbus.  
31 Scholars have estimated that around a quarter to a third of the  
32 enslaved Africans brought to the United States were Muslims; and

33 WHEREAS, The first wave of Muslim immigration to the United  
34 States began in the late 19th century from regions under Ottoman  
35 Empire rule. In 1924, Muslims were prohibited from entering the  
36 United States under the Immigration Act. After World War II,  
37 many Muslims came to America as students seeking higher  
38 education and as refugees fleeing oppression. With the passage of  
39 the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965, greater numbers of  
40 Muslims began migrating to America; and

1 WHEREAS, The First Amendment of the United States  
2 Constitution guarantees all Americans the right to practice their  
3 religion. Nonetheless, the Muslim American community continues  
4 to face religious prejudice. Many members live in fear, facing  
5 isolation and discrimination. Recent polling shows that 50 percent  
6 of all American voters support a temporary ban on Muslims  
7 traveling to the United States. Approximately 55 percent of  
8 California Muslim school-aged children have been bullied. There  
9 is also a surge in hate crimes against Muslim Americans; and

10 WHEREAS, Some American political figures have proposed  
11 or publicly supported “[A] total and complete shutdown of Muslims  
12 entering the United States.” It has also been proposed that a federal  
13 commission be established to study immigration policies, including  
14 the proposed ban on foreign Muslims entering the United States;  
15 and

16 WHEREAS, Some American political figures have also  
17 proposed or publicly supported monitoring mosques and policing  
18 and profiling Muslim Americans; now, therefore, be it

19 *Resolved by the Assembly and the Senate of the State of*  
20 *California, jointly,* That the Legislature commends Muslim  
21 Americans for their economic, political, and cultural impact on  
22 California and the United States. California prides itself on cultural  
23 and religious diversity. Muslim Americans are a vital part of the  
24 community and should feel safe and are welcome throughout  
25 California and the United States; and be it further

26 *Resolved,* That the Legislature respectfully requests Members  
27 of the United States Congress to respect the First Amendment,  
28 which forbids Congress from restricting an individual’s religious  
29 practices, and to speak out against and reject efforts to monitor  
30 mosques, efforts to police and profile American Muslims, and  
31 efforts to prohibit Muslims from immigrating to the United States,  
32 and respectfully requests Members of Congress to speak out against  
33 and reject any efforts to pursue an immigration policy based on  
34 religion; and be it further

35 *Resolved,* That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit copies  
36 of this resolution to the Speaker of the House of Representatives,  
37 to the Majority Leader of the Senate, to each Senator and

- 1 Representative from California in the Congress of the United
- 2 States, and to the author for appropriate distribution.

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