



# Governor Murphy Signs Joint Resolution Establishing “Muslim Heritage Month” in New Jersey

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**TRENTON** – Governor Phil Murphy and First Lady Tammy Murphy today hosted an Eid Celebration at Drumthwacket, marking the end of Ramadan. During the celebration, Governor Murphy signed a joint resolution (SJR105/ AJR194) designating the month of January as “Muslim Heritage Month” in New Jersey. Building on Governor Murphy’s and the Legislature’s shared commitment to recognizing the importance of the many religious and cultural traditions of New Jersey’s residents, this designation aims to promote awareness and appreciation of the many contributions of the state’s Muslim community.

“New Jersey greatly benefits from the patriotism, philanthropy, advocacy, civic engagement, business, and culture of Muslim Americans and Muslim American organizations in our state,” said **Governor Murphy**. “I am proud to designate January of each year as Muslim Heritage Month as it will shine a light on the rich histories, cultures, and shared principles of Muslim Americans. New Jersey takes great pride in its diversity and we will continue to recognize and celebrate the positive impact Muslims have made, and continue to make, to the advancement of this state.”

Primary sponsors of SJR105/AJR194 include Senators Joe Pennacchio and Brian Stack, and Assemblymembers Angela McKnight, Shanique Speight, and Annette Chaparro.

“This legislation will elevate awareness and appreciation of the Muslim American community and their accomplishments in New Jersey,” said **Senator Pennacchio**. “There are nearly 300,000 Muslim Americans in this state, including numerous current and former elected officials dedicated to public service in their communities. It is long past time to recognize these individuals for their contributions to the diverse fabric of New Jersey.”

“New Jersey has the highest percentage of Muslim residents in the nation, and in recent years, the Muslim community has been the target of an increasing number of bias incidents,” said **Senator Stack**. “This designation will allow the State and its residents to respectfully acknowledge and promote awareness while appreciating and recognizing the many contributions of the State’s Muslim community.”

“Those in our Muslim American communities have been for many decades a source of pride across New Jersey and contributed mightily to the multicultural fabric of our state,” said **Senator Gopal, who serves as Chair of the AAPI Legislative Caucus**. “Setting aside a month to honor these neighbors who practice their faith and traditions with dignity, and who take up positions of leadership in our government, businesses, and cultural institutions is a positive step that can only lead to greater understanding among our people and make our diverse state ever stronger.”

“By designating January as Muslim Heritage Month, we are carving out time to recognize the positive impact Muslims continue to have on our state and nation,” said **Assemblywoman McKnight**. “One of New Jersey’s best attributes is its diversity. People of all religions and races make invaluable contributions to our communities, which we must acknowledge and celebrate. Having a Muslim Heritage Month will allow us to recognize all that Muslim Americans have done to advance our state and pay tribute to this growing community.”

“We are excited to be celebrating the Governor’s signing into legislation the Muslim Heritage Resolution, a historic moment for the Muslim community in New Jersey,” said **Zainab Syed, President of American Muslims for Democracy**. “New Jersey will be the fourth state in the country to recognize the American Muslim legacy. It has been an honor to be part of this movement and we are extremely grateful for the support from the governor’s office and legislators that contributed to the passing of this legislation. As a state that has the highest percentage of Muslims in the nation, we are overjoyed to have a month that celebrates and recognizes our community in a positive light and hope that this recognition further pushes the engagement of the Muslim community in society.”

“The Muslim American community is a diverse and vibrant part of the multicultural tapestry that is New Jersey,” said **S. Nadia Hussain, Co-Founder of BAWDI**. “The designation of January in celebration of Muslim heritage is wonderful way to educate and enrich the cultural knowledge of all New Jersey residents while celebrating the contributions Muslim Americans have made and continue to make to our great state.”

“This is a historic moment. For too long, we’ve seen damaging and irresponsible depictions of Muslims. These narratives have tangible consequences, but now, we will be seeing the counter and, hopefully soon, prevailing narrative: One that highlights, celebrates, and acknowledges the American Muslim community in New Jersey,” said **CAIR-NJ Executive Director Selaedin Maksut**. “We are happy to take this small step towards pushing back against anti-Muslim bigotry, and we are excited for what’s to come. We also want to thank the Governor and his administration for their support of this resolution.”

“This is a significant step towards promoting tolerance and acceptance among communities, and it serves as a reminder that discrimination and hate have no place in New Jersey,” said **President and Founder of NJ Sisterhood Jessica Berrocal**. “The making of January Muslim Heritage Month will advocate for inclusion. It is crucial that we acknowledge and celebrate the contributions of the Muslim community to our state’s diverse heritage. Muslim Heritage Month not only recognizes the rich cultural contributions of Muslims but also creates an opportunity for us to deepen our understanding of the religion, customs, and traditions. Additionally, it is crucial that we protect the rights of Muslim children and ensure that they can express their religious identity without fear of discrimination or bullying. By advocating for inclusivity and raising awareness around Muslim Heritage Month, we can foster a more welcoming and accepting environment for all children in wholesome. Overall, Muslim Heritage Month is a step towards building stronger, more inclusive communities that celebrate diversity and reject hatred and bigotry. We hope that other states will follow and implement similar initiatives to promote mutual respect and understanding among all people. I dedicated this bill to all Muslim children around the state of New Jersey.”

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[Home \(/governor/\)](/governor/)

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[\(/governor/initiatives/#Justice\)](/governor/initiatives/#Justice)

[Transportation](#)

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