



Assemblymember

Alex Bores

Assembly District 73



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‘A Call to Action’: Alex Bores Releases New Study Documenting Islamophobia in New York City

Findings highlight widespread discrimination, particularly harming women and children, and a path forward for a more inclusive city

NEW YORK CITY — New York State Assemblymember Alex Bores today released a new community survey documenting the prevalence and impact of Islamophobia across New York City. Conducted in partnership with volunteers across New York, the report offers one of the most detailed looks to date at how Muslim New Yorkers experience discrimination in their daily lives — and what the city must do to confront it.

New York City is home to roughly 800,000 Muslims — about 10 percent of the city’s population — making it one of the largest Muslim communities in the country. Additional recent studies have also underscored Muslim New Yorkers’ remarkable achievements and noted the community’s key role in driving technological innovation.

“We can’t fix something we refuse to acknowledge is broken,” **said Assemblymember Bores**. “New York is the World’s City. That means every single person here, of every faith, must know that their fundamental value will be respected and celebrated. This report is both a mirror and a roadmap: it shows us where we are and how much work remains to build the city we aspire to be.”

“We aim to encourage communities and society to remove their ignorance towards Islam and the misunderstandings that surround the religion due to biases and harmful media focused islamophobia,” **said Imam Ahmed Dewidar at The Islamic Society of Midtown Manhattan**. “The Islamic Society of Midtown Manhattan and myself are honored to host and be a part of such a noble effort thanks to Assembly Member Alex Bores and team to teach our community to recognize their rights to respond gracefully, professionally and faithfully.”

“As a Jewish organization, we know how deeply damaging it is when hate goes unchecked. This report offers a sobering account of the realities of Islamophobia facing many Muslim New Yorkers today,” said **Josh Kramer, Former Director, American Jewish Committee (AJC) New York**. “Clearly naming both the problem and the gaps in response underscores the need for all sectors of society to work together to better protect the safety and dignity of every community.”

“Many of my friends and neighbors mentioned Islamophobic experiences and I realized that the statistics did not reflect the surge in such incidents,” **said community activist Sahar Husain**. “Due to a lack of data, resources employed for the Muslim community to resolve this issue are

inadequate too. So I am grateful to Assembly Member Alex Bores for listening and conducting this in-depth survey. I hope this survey will be used by government agencies, elected officials and media.”

“This is a great start but we need to do more,” **continued Sahar Husain.** “I look forward to seeing other elected officials, the Human Rights Commission, hate crime agencies at the NYPD, District Attorney, and Mayor’s office, and the senior administration at the Department of Education to continue to work harder to understand and address this problem.”

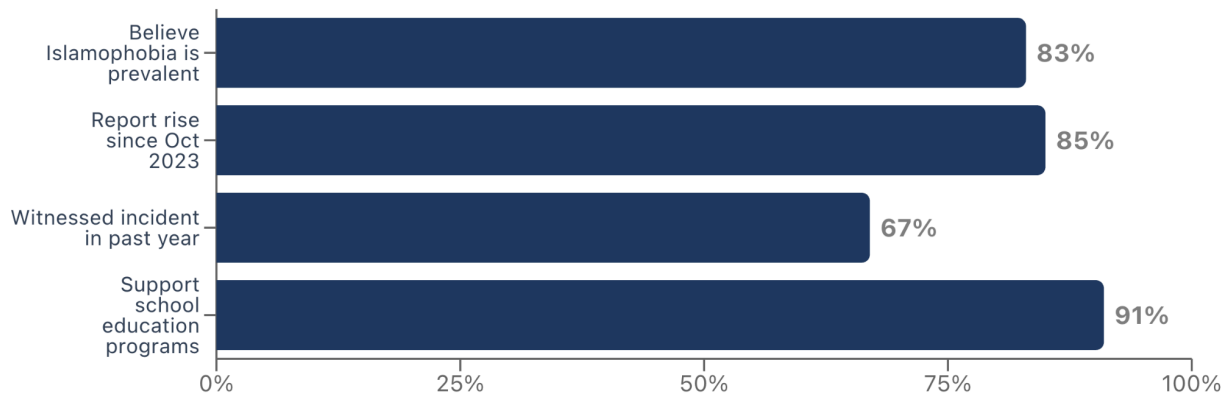
Key Findings

The Bores survey’s findings reveal widespread concern over and experiences of bias and harassment:

- **83 percent** of respondents believe Islamophobia is prevalent in New York City, and 85 percent report that it has increased since October 2023.
- **More than two-thirds** of respondents said they have witnessed an Islamophobic incident in the past year alone.
- Muslim women who wear visible religious attire reported significantly higher rates of harassment, with **92 percent** saying Islamophobia is prevalent and 94 percent reporting an increase since late 2023.
- **37 percent** of respondents said they know a child who has been bullied because of their Muslim faith, often being called slurs such as “terrorist” — the most commonly reported insult documented in the survey.
- **70 percent** of respondents said community or institutional responses to hate incidents are insufficient, reinforcing a sense that Muslim New Yorkers are not being adequately protected or heard.
- **91 percent** of respondents support implementing anti-Islamophobia education in public schools.

The Big Picture

The release of the report comes at a moment of heightened tension in New York City, a global capital that has too often fallen short of its promise for Muslim residents. While the election of Mayor Zohran Mamdani has, Bores hopes, marked the beginning of a new era in how New Yorkers treat one another, the findings underscore why strategic -- and sustained -- action remains essential.



“Hate against any one community threatens all communities,” **Bores continued.** “The same forces that drive Islamophobia — scapegoating and dehumanization — also fuel antisemitism, racism, and every other form of bigotry. New York has an opportunity to lead by confronting this head-on. Confronting Islamophobia strengthens the city as a whole.”

The Path Forward

The report outlines a clear path forward, with specific recommendations on how New York can confront all forms of bigotry with equal commitment.

1. Update Hate Crime Documentation: The Office for the Prevention of Hate Crimes should update its "What Is A Hate Crime" document to include specific examples of Islamophobic hate crimes, particularly the use of "terrorist" as a slur—the most commonly reported discriminatory language in this survey.

2. Expand Educational Programming: Integrate anti-Islamophobia content into the NYC Public Schools' Respect for All program, alongside existing efforts to address antisemitism and other forms of discrimination. Education that builds understanding across all communities strengthens the fabric of our diverse city.

3. Train Frontline Workers: Provide targeted training for NYPD officers, public school teachers, and MTA workers on identifying and responding to hate incidents, including Islamophobia. Frontline workers in high-traffic public spaces are often first responders to bias incidents.

4. Increase Resources for Hate Crime Prevention: Advocate for increased funding and staffing for the Office for the Prevention of Hate Crimes to ensure adequate capacity to address rising hate incidents across all affected communities.

ALEX BORES

STATE ASSEMBLYMEMBER

The Prevalence of Islamophobia in New York City

A Community Survey Report from the Office of Assemblymember Alex Bores

In partnership with volunteers across New York City, the Office of Assemblymember Alex Bores conducted a comprehensive survey to document experiences of Islamophobia among Muslim New Yorkers. This initiative reflects a commitment to understanding and addressing all forms of hate-based discrimination in our diverse city.

New York City is home to approximately 769,000 Muslims—roughly 9% of the city's population—making it one of the largest Muslim communities in the nation. Understanding the challenges this community faces is essential to building a safer, more inclusive city for all residents.

Key Findings:

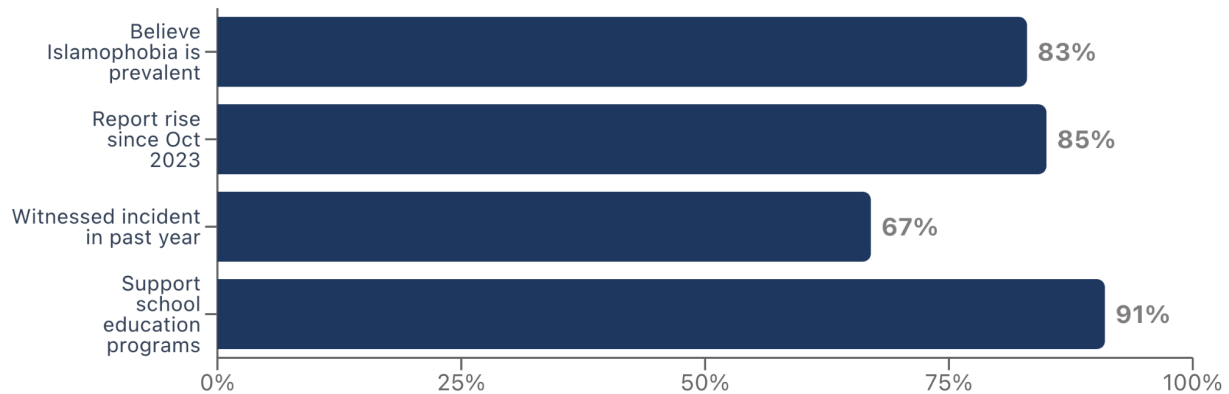
- **83%** of respondents believe Islamophobia is prevalent in NYC
- **85%** report a rise in Islamophobia since October 2023
- **67%** have witnessed an Islamophobic incident in the past year
- **37%** know a child who has been bullied due to their Muslim faith
- **91%** support implementing anti-Islamophobia education in public schools

Methodology: The survey was developed to capture both quantitative data on the prevalence of Islamophobic incidents and qualitative testimony from community members. Assemblymember Bores' team conducted extensive outreach throughout NYC, including direct engagement at Manhattan mosques and meetings with local imams to gain deeper insights into community experiences. **Sample:** 261 total respondents. 63% male, 37% female. Age distribution: 29% (36-49), 21% (25-35), 18% (50-64), 18% (18-24), 8% (65+), 6% (under 18). 98% self-identified as Muslim. Diverse occupations including students, physicians, teachers, engineers, and finance professionals

THE BIG PICTURE

Perceptions of Islamophobia in NYC

There has been an unprecedented increase in reports of Islamophobia since October 7th, creating a climate of heightened tension and distress.



"Post Oct 2023, folks have lost jobs, been afraid to speak up on their opinions on what is happening in Palestine/Israel. As a person at a large institution in NYC I am still afraid to speak up and express how I feel." - Survey respondent

"I was verbally harassed by a woman in Gramercy outside my son's school... She called me a terrorist and an Arab and as she was about to physically drag me outside the church premises, a fellow parent intervened and I managed to escape." - Survey respondent

"In the supermarket, saying excuse me while passing, and the couple's husband said 'I hate Muslims.'" - Survey respondent

ANALYSIS

Women Report Higher Rates

Muslim women who wear visible religious attire face elevated rates of harassment and discrimination.

92%

of women say Islamophobia is prevalent

vs. 83% overall

94%

of women report increase since Oct '23

vs. 85% overall

"I am afraid to wear hijab because I commute by train and I don't know if I [am] safe enough to walk alone or take the train to go to work."

"I've been told I should wear a turban instead because it's less recognizably Muslim."

"My daughter's friend got spat on in the train station once for wearing a hijab."

54%

know someone discriminated against for wearing hijab, scarf, or abaya

IMPACT ON CHILDREN

Faith-Based Bullying in Schools

37%

know a child bullied for Muslim faith

91%

support anti-Islamophobia education

"12 years old daughter told by classmates that all Muslims are terrorists."

"One of my children was called a terrorist by a teacher for covering their hair with a hoodie."

"Once in eighth grade there was a loud boom noise. My classmates turned to an Arab Muslim and said it was probably her family."

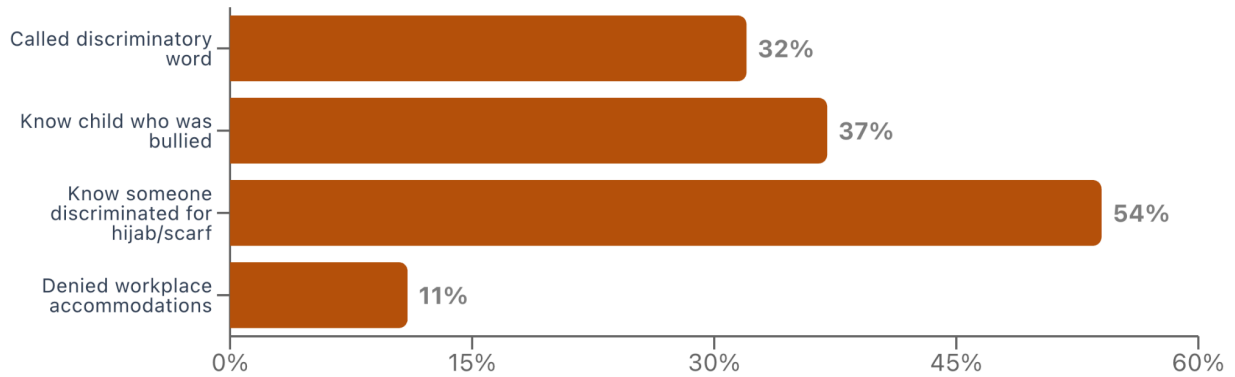
"My daughter was bullied in her school by her school mate and got her hijab pulled out."

“Terrorist”

The most commonly reported slur was "terrorist"—cited by the plurality of respondents who experienced verbal harassment. Other reported slurs included "bomber," ethnic slurs, and religiously derogatory language. **32% have been called a discriminatory word related to being Muslim.**

IN THE EVERYDAY

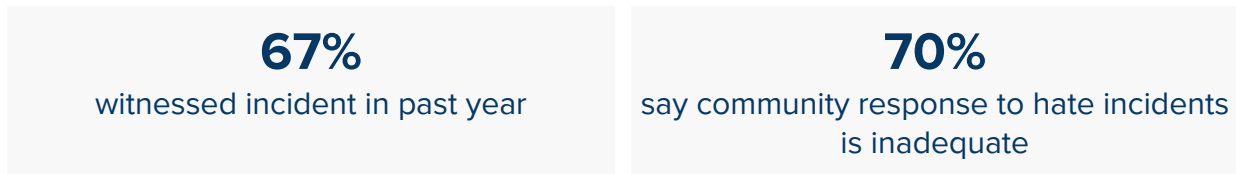
Discrimination in Daily Life



RESPONDENT TESTIMONY

"I was verbally harassed by a woman in Gramercy outside my son's school... She called me a terrorist and an Arab. The police did not take it seriously as a hate crime and filed it under harassment."

Muslim New Yorkers perceive a gap between the severity of hate incidents and the community/institutional response:



Common accommodation issues cited include lack of prayer spaces, **difficulty attending Friday prayers (Jumu'ah), scheduling conflicts with Ramadan observance, and Muslim holidays not being recognized.**

"No prayer rooms in my workplace."

"Kids in Charter schools don't get Muslim holidays like Eid. You can take a day off but will be marked absent."

PATH FORWARD

Recommendations

Hate against any community threatens all communities. The same dynamics that fuel Islamophobia—scapegoating, stereotyping, dehumanization—are the drivers of antisemitism, anti-Asian hate, anti-Black racism, and discrimination against all marginalized groups.

1. Update Hate Crime Documentation: The Office for the Prevention of Hate Crimes should update its "What Is A Hate Crime" document to include specific examples of Islamophobic hate crimes, particularly the use of "terrorist" as a slur—the most commonly reported discriminatory language in this survey.

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Conclusion

The findings of this survey paint a picture of a community experiencing widespread discrimination—in public spaces, schools, workplaces, and daily interactions. Muslim New Yorkers report feeling unsafe, experiencing verbal harassment, and witnessing their children bullied for their faith.

These experiences demand the same attention and resources we devote to addressing hate against any community. A safer New York requires confronting all forms of bigotry with equal commitment.

Assemblymember Bores remains committed to working with Muslim community leaders, interfaith partners, and fellow legislators to ensure all New Yorkers can live free from hate-based discrimination.