

# *City of Albany*

## *Proclamation*

### **AMERICAN MUSLIM APPRECIATION AND AWARENESS MONTH April 2025**

**WHEREAS**, enriched by the unparalleled diversity of its residents, the City of Albany takes great pride in supporting individual religious freedoms and is strengthened by the many varied religious, political, and cultural traditions and contributions of its diverse populations, including those that practice Islam; and

**WHEREAS**, Muslims have been part of U.S. history from the beginning and have contributed to the production of wealth and construction of the nation; they are also part of the rich history of the civil rights movement; and

**WHEREAS**, over 90,000 Muslims live in Alameda County<sup>1</sup>, and make innumerable contributions to the cultural, political, and economic fabric and well-being of California and the United States; and

**WHEREAS**, the Aaron and Margaret Wallace Foundation (AMWF), founded in 1957 provides basic necessities to over 30,000 individuals per month, including hot meals, fresh produce, toys, books and more. Brother Abdul-Jalil Al- Hakim and Brother Belal Salih Esa were instrumental in supporting the Albany community, providing food, hygiene supplies, and hot meals. Belal, who served not just the Albany community but also the Oakland Islamic Center and the Jumma Free Farmers Market dedicated his life to service and uplifting his community and beyond. On September 19, 2022 Belal lost his life to senseless gun violence but his legacy to support the underserved community lives on through AMWF, his family and loved ones; and

**WHEREAS**, the A2Z Foundation was established in 2014 to serve the Bay Area community by improving access to healthcare and expanded their services to provide over 35,000 pounds of food, including fresh produce and shelf stable items to Albany families; and

**WHEREAS**, Taliah Mirmalek, civil rights activist advocated for workers, tenants, and immigrants in Albany and surrounding communities by offering pro bono services at the Centro Legal de La Raza's Workers and Tenants Rights Clinic in Oakland and the East Bay Community Law Center's Immigration Clinic in Berkeley. Taliah also co-founded Law Students for Radical Real Estate which supports the Sustainable Economies Law Center's outreach efforts with various groups to create alternatives to extractive capitalism. Additionally, she is the cofounder of the Free the Land Project, and played an active role in the Afghan Humanitarian Parole Project; and

---

<sup>1</sup> Senzai , Farid , and Hatem Bazian. "The Bay Area Muslim Study: Establishing Identity and Community." Institute for Social Policy and Understanding. One Nation Bay Area Project, 01 May 2013. Page 9.

**WHEREAS**, the City of Albany has had distinct privileges of Muslim American and Arab representation and experiences in local elected offices, which includes current Albany School Board Member Sadia Khan - who has facilitated advocacy in numerous ways for housing and educational equity for families in Albany; and

**WHEREAS**, it is appropriate to acknowledge and promote awareness of the myriad of invaluable contributions of Muslims in California and across the country, and provide them the respect and acknowledgment every person deserves; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of Albany benefits from the presence and work of local parent groups in the school district, such as the Southwest Asian (Greater Middle East) and North Africa (SWANA) parent engagement group that have uplifted visibility and representation of Muslim Americans and Arab families that identify with SWANA.

**NOW, THEREFORE**, the City of Albany does hereby recognize the California State Designation of April 2025 as American Muslim Appreciation and Awareness Month to acknowledge the rich history, contributions, and guiding virtues of Muslims and to commend all Muslim communities in California for the lasting positive impact they have made toward the advancement of our City and country.

DATED: May 5, 2025

*City of Albany Proclamation No. 2025-05*

---

ROBIN D. LÓPEZ, MAYOR