



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Michael Gianaris

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MICHAEL GIANARIS December 10, 2015

| ISSUE: **SMALL BUSINESS, POLICE**



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OFFICE OF SENATOR MICHAEL GIANARIS

For Immediate Release: December 10, 2015

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Queens Leaders Stand with Local Assault Victim Following anti-Muslim Attack

(Queens, NY) – Following the recent assault on Astoria small business owner Sarker Haque of Fatima Food Mart, Senator Michael Gianaris, Senator Jose Peralta, Assemblymember Aravella Simotas, Councilmember Costa Constantinides, Public Advocate Letitia James, and community leaders came together to denounce the hateful rhetoric and the violence it inspires. The attacker is said to have proclaimed, “I kill Muslims” during the assault and was taken into custody by the NYPD, which is now investigating the incident as a hate crime.

“In our neighborhood and our nation, we pride ourselves on our diversity and tolerance," **said Senator Michael Gianaris (D-Astoria).**"Hateful rhetoric leads to hateful and violent acts that must be denounced and dealt with aggressively. I am proud to represent this community and will continue to stand against these unacceptable hate crimes.”

“It is unfortunate that in our times, we have to stand here in solidarity with the Muslim community because one of its members was viciously attacked. New Yorkers have a long tradition of welcoming immigrants from across the globe, and our Muslim brothers and

sisters are no exception,” **said Senator Jose Peralta (D-East Elmhurst)**. “As New Yorkers, we are not going to tolerate hate crimes.”

“I was horrified to learn of the vicious and cowardly attack on Sarker Haque this weekend,” **said Assemblymember Aravella Simotas (D-Astoria)**. “Astoria was built by generations of people who came here to build a better life for their families in peace and safety, we will not tolerate acts of violence and hatred.”

“This targeted assault is unconscionable,” **said Councilmember Costa Constantinides (D-Astoria)**. This crime is the antithesis of what Astoria is all about. The strength of our community lies in our diversity. This small business owner is part of the fabric of our neighborhood and we all condemn this hate crime.”

“The assault against Sarker Haque was an assault against all Americans who want to live in a society where diversity is respected and religious and ethnic hatred are things of the past,” **said Queens Borough President Melinda Katz**. “It is therefore critically important to all of us that the perpetrator is held accountable for this violent crime.”

“There is no place for hatred and racism in our City, and we stand today – and every day – united against Islamophobia, and all forms of bigotry,” **said New York City Comptroller Scott M. Stringer**.

"Any type of bigotry or discriminatory behavior towards any New Yorker, regardless of their religion, ethnicity, or sexual orientation, will never be tolerated in New York City," **said Public Advocate Letitia James.** "We are a City known for our diversity and acceptance and that will never be compromised. We are here today to stand up and show that peace and love always triumph over hate."

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