



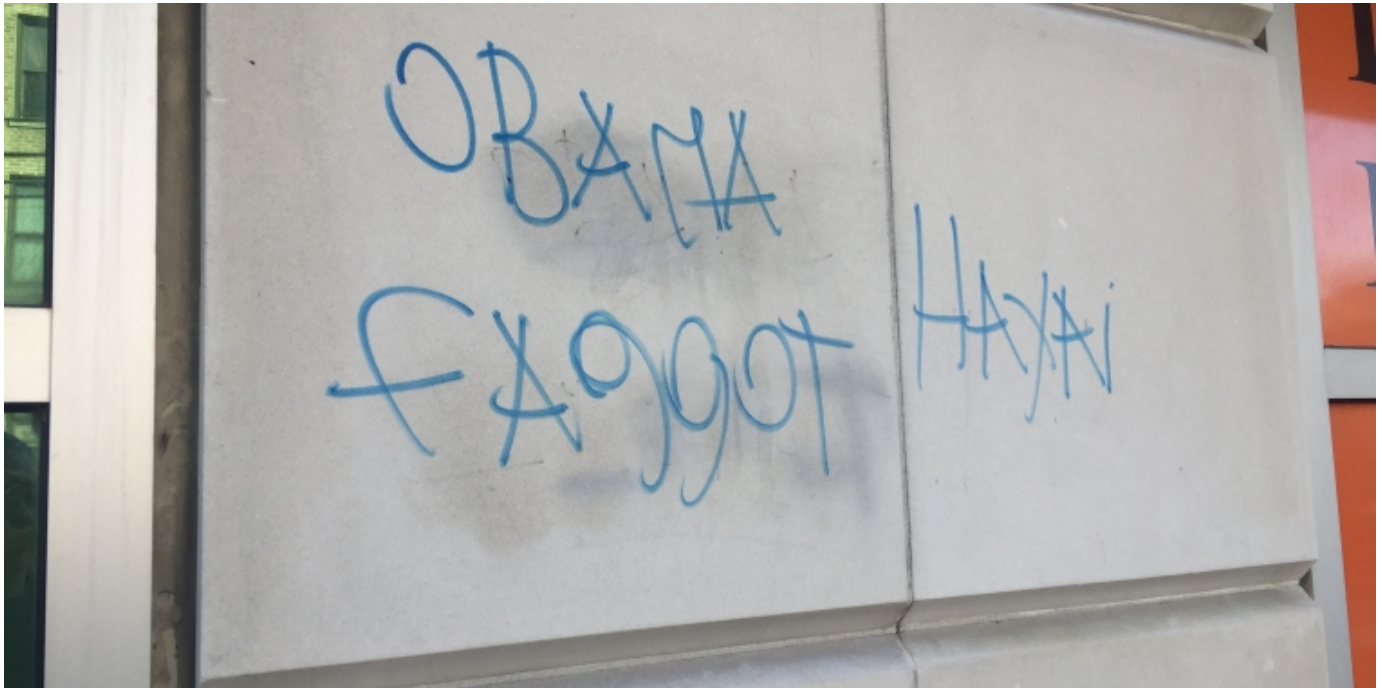
NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Michael Gianaris

## Gianaris, Simotas and Constantinides Condemn Hate Graffiti Scrawled on their District Offices and Surrounding Community

MICHAEL GIANARIS March 21, 2017

| ISSUE: **HATE CRIME, GRAFFITI, POLICE**



(Astoria, NY) – Senator Michael Gianaris, Assemblywoman Aravella Simotas and Councilmember Costa Constantinides released the following statement addressing hate graffiti on the elected officials offices and surrounding community.

Senator Michael Gianaris said, "It is shameful that someone is trying to divide our diverse neighborhood through hostility and bigotry. We can assure our community that these hateful actions will not silence our opposition towards policies we consider un-American, and we will continue to fight for those who need our help no matter the cost."

Assemblywoman Aravella Simotas said, "Writing hateful graffiti is a cowardly, criminal act that pollutes our neighborhood and makes people feel less safe. I am confident that the 114 Precinct will catch the perpetrator or perpetrators, whatever their sick motivation may be. These acts of hate will neither silence nor stop Astoria's elected officials from working to fight discrimination and intolerance and to protect the beautiful diversity of our neighborhood."

Council Member Costa Constantinides said, "I strongly condemn this symbol of hate and vandalism in our community. As we see hate crimes rise across the city, we stand together in support of respect and tolerance. We will continue to fight bigoted and despicable acts such as these. Thank you to the 114th Precinct for their hard work investigating these hate crimes."

The elected officials have been vocal against the Trump administration's executive orders and have taken actions towards uniting our neighborhoods including hosting a rally in support of the Muslim community in Little Egypt and a community celebration of Astoria's diversity.

Senator Gianaris has taken direct efforts against the Trump administration including introducing legislation that would prohibit the Port Authority, which administers New York airports, from utilizing any of its resources in support of the Executive Order's enforcement. Additionally, Senator Gianaris introduced legislation that would add immigration status to the list of protected classes in the state's Human Rights and Civil Right Laws and has fought federal efforts that would discriminate against people based on their ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation and gender.

The 114th Precinct has documented each incident and is examining local security footage that will help to identify the person committing these heinous acts.

The attached photo displays the statement that was drawn on the same location as the elected officials government offices.

###