

# An America for All of Us

## Our Country, Our Voices

### Bring the Campaign to Your Community!

#### Toolkit Appendices

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America prides itself as being a land of justice and equality. Over the past 10 years, however, many communities that call America home have been targeted through unfair policies and xenophobic rhetoric. Let us raise our voices to return to an America that is true to the ideals of fairness, diversity and integrity – **An America for All of Us**

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## Appendix A: List of Organizations

### Population-Based Organizations

American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC): [www.adc.org](http://www.adc.org)  
Arab American Institute (AAI): [www.aaiusa.org](http://www.aaiusa.org)  
Asian American Justice Center (AAJC): [www.advancingequality.org](http://www.advancingequality.org)  
Hmong National Development (HND): [www.hndinc.org](http://www.hndinc.org)  
Japanese American Citizens League (JACL): [www.jacl.org](http://www.jacl.org)  
Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund (MALDEF): [www.maldef.org](http://www.maldef.org)  
Muslim Advocates: [www.muslimadvocates.org](http://www.muslimadvocates.org)  
Muslim Public Affairs Council (MPAC): [www.mpac.org](http://www.mpac.org)  
National Asian Pacific American Women’s Forum (NAPAWF): [www.napawf.org](http://www.napawf.org)  
National Association for the Advancement of Color People (NAACP): [www.naacp.org](http://www.naacp.org)  
National Coalition of South Asian Organizations (NCSO): [www.saalt.org/pages/Meet-the-National-Coalition.html](http://www.saalt.org/pages/Meet-the-National-Coalition.html)  
National Council of La Raza (NCLR): [www.nclr.org](http://www.nclr.org)  
National Korean American Service and Education Consortium (NAKASEC): [www.nakasec.org](http://www.nakasec.org)  
National Network of Arab American Communities (NNAAC): [www.nnaac.org](http://www.nnaac.org)  
Organization of Chinese Americans (OCA): [www.ocanational.org](http://www.ocanational.org)  
Sikh American Legal Defense and Education Fund (SALDEF): [www.saldef.org](http://www.saldef.org)  
Sikh Coalition: [www.sikhcoalition.org](http://www.sikhcoalition.org)  
Southeast Asia Resource Action Center: [www.searac.org](http://www.searac.org)  
UNITED SIKHS: [www.unitedsikhs.org](http://www.unitedsikhs.org)

### Issue-Based Coalitions

America’s Voice: [www.americasvoiceonline.org](http://www.americasvoiceonline.org)  
American Civil Rights Union (ACLU): [www.aclu.org](http://www.aclu.org)  
Amnesty International USA (AIUSA): [www.amnestyusa.org](http://www.amnestyusa.org)  
Bill of Rights Defense Committee (BORDC): [www.bordc.org](http://www.bordc.org)  
Center for Community Change (CCC): [www.communitychange.org](http://www.communitychange.org)  
Center for Constitutional Rights (CCR): [www.ccrjustice.org](http://www.ccrjustice.org)  
Center for National Security Studies (CNSS): [www.cnss.org](http://www.cnss.org)  
Center for New Community: [www.newcomm.org](http://www.newcomm.org)  
Human Rights First: [www.humanrightsfirst.org](http://www.humanrightsfirst.org)  
Human Rights Watch: [www.hrw.org](http://www.hrw.org)  
Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights (LCCR): [www.civilrights.org](http://www.civilrights.org)  
National Network for Immigrant and Refugee Rights (NNIRR): [www.nnirr.org](http://www.nnirr.org)  
Not in Our Town (NIOT): [www.niot.org](http://www.niot.org)  
Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC): [www.splcenter.org](http://www.splcenter.org)

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## Media Advisory Example

FOR RELEASE ON  
Wednesday, October 27

CONTACT: Afshan Khoja  
301.270.1855 | afshan@saalt.org

### SAALT Launches Report on the Rise of Xenophobia in Political Discourse

**WHAT:** South Asian Americans Leading Together (SAALT), a DC-based, national non-profit organization fostering civic and political engagement, is launching *From Macacas to Turban Toppers: The Rise in Xenophobic and Racist Rhetoric in American Political Discourse*

As the midterm elections approach, SAALT is releasing a report that presents an inventory and analysis of the rise in xenophobic rhetoric since September 11, 2001, and calls for a return to civility in the political sphere.

Excerpt from the report:

"Xenophobia and racism have no place in political and civic discourse. Yet, a pattern of such rhetoric continues to exist in America's political environment today. For decades, African Americans and Latinos have been subjected to racist rhetoric in the political sphere. More recently, as this report shows, South Asians, Muslims, Sikhs, and Arab Americans have been the targets of such rhetoric by public officials and political candidates from both sides of the aisle. Even more alarming is the use of xenophobia and racism to stir negative responses to political candidates of South Asian descent."

#### WHO:

- HILARY SHELTON, Director of the Washington Bureau of the NAACP
- ARSALAN IFTIKHAR, International human rights lawyer and founder, TheMuslimGuy.com
- DEEPA IYER, Executive Director, SAALT (South Asian Americans Leading Together)
- PRIYA MURTHY, Policy Director, SAALT (South Asian Americans Leading Together)

**WHEN:** 12:30 PM - 2:00 PM Wednesday October 27, 2010

#### WHERE:

News Conference Room  
National Education Association  
1201 16th St., NW  
Washington, DC 20036  
Closest Metro: Farragut North (red line)

Please RSVP by Tuesday, October 26 via email at [info@saalt.org](mailto:info@saalt.org) (Subject: "Oct 27 Launch"). Refreshments will be served

#### EXCLUSIVELY FOR REPORTERS!

The launch is also accessible through a Webinar. Spaces are limited, so please reserve your webinar seat now at: <https://www2.gotomeeting.com/register/223419098>

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the Webinar. Journalists who register by Monday, October 25, 2010 will receive embargoed copies of the report.

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For more information or to schedule interviews, please contact:  
Afshan Khoja, Communications Manager | [afshan@saalt.org](mailto:afshan@saalt.org) | 301.270.1855

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## Appendix C: Press Release Example

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
Wednesday, October 27

CONTACT: Afshan Khoja  
301.270.1855 | afshan@saalt.org

### As Elections Approach, Xenophobia and Racism Continue to Affect Community and Candidates

SAALT Releases Report on the Rise of Xenophobic Rhetoric since 9/11

(Washington): Racist and xenophobic comments made by elected officials and political candidates have contributed to negative public opinions and policies, according to a report released by DC area-based, non-profit organization, South Asian Americans Leading Together (SAALT), on October 27, 2010.

With the midterm elections round the corner, SAALT's report, *From Macacas to Turban Toppers: The Rise in Xenophobic and Racist Rhetoric in American Political Discourse*, documents intolerant remarks made by elected officials and those running for office. According to the report, since September 11, there has been an unprecedented rise in xenophobic statements that have specifically targeted South Asians, Arab Americans, Muslims, and Sikhs.

"Racist rhetoric cannot be characterized as ignorant, funny or inconsequential. It has far-reaching impact - such as contributing to a sense of alienation and isolation on the part of affected communities to shaping negative public opinion and harmful policies," said Deepa Iyer, Executive Director of SAALT.

According to the report, since 9/11, South Asians, Muslims and Sikhs have been perceived as threats to national security; as political liabilities; as outsiders or foreigners; and, as unsuitable for political office. Among many incidents, the report documents and analyzes political ads about outsourcing, statements targeting a South Asian candidate's accent or "funny-sounding" last name, and stances that support profiling and surveillance of certain communities. It also presents a special spotlight on comments related to the Park 51 cultural center ('Ground Zero mosque') and Islamophobia.



*Speakers at the briefing (L-R): Arsalan Iftikhar, lawyer, commentator and blogger; Hilary Shelton, Director, Washington Bureau of NAACP; Priya Murthy, Policy Director, SAALT; Deepa Iyer, Executive Director, SAALT.*

"The details in this report are extremely helpful not only to the South Asian community but to the rest of the country as well", said Hilary Shelton, Director, Washington Bureau of National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), one of the speakers at the briefing. Shelton compared the experiences of Muslims, South Asians, Arab Americans and Sikhs to those of African Americans, who have also been dehumanized and marginalized by a racist political climate.

Reflecting on the current climate of Islamophobia, lawyer, commentator and founder of themuslimguy.com, Arsalan Iftikhar, noted that "'Muslim' has become the accepted slur in America... Race, xenophobia, bigotry have now become a permanent political wedge issue in America."

The report also notes that even though a high number of South Asians are running for office this year, including several congressional candidates and one gubernatorial candidate, these individuals have to face additional hurdles when their loyalty, patriotism and "American-ness" have been questioned.

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Calling for a return to civility in the public sphere, the report identifies individual and collective strategies that can help enrich the country's political and civic life. "We urge elected officials, candidates and community members to take action. For example, policymakers and political candidates should condemn racist and xenophobic rhetoric, and political parties should adopt no-tolerance policies. In addition, community members should hold accountable those who make such remarks," said Priya Murthy, Policy Director at SAALT, and primary author of the report. The report includes tips to empower community members to respond to such statements on their own, by providing resources and tools to engage in civic and political activities.

*Speakers at the briefing (L-R): Hilary Shelton, Director, Washington Bureau of NAACP; Arsalan Iftikhar, lawyer, commentator and blogger; Priya Murthy, Policy Director, SAALT; Deepa Iyer, Executive Director, SAALT.*



*From Macacas to Turban Toppers: The Rise in Xenophobic and Racist Rhetoric in American Political Discourse* is available at [www.saalt.org](http://www.saalt.org). SAALT's Policy Director, Priya Murthy was also featured on NPR's "Morning Edition" drawing upon elements of the report. To hear this piece by Sandip Roy, please click [here](#).

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For more information, please contact:

Afshan Khoja, Communications Manager, SAALT at (301) 270 1855, or email [afshan@saalt.org](mailto:afshan@saalt.org).

# An America for All of Us

## Our Country, Our Voices

### Pledge for Policymakers

I, \_\_\_\_\_, pledge to my constituents that I will:

- Oppose policies and programs that result in discriminatory treatment or racial/religious profiling of immigrant communities and communities of color
- Refrain from making statements based on harmful stereotypes of immigrant communities and communities of color
- Object in a public way to intolerant rhetoric and actions that occur in the public and private sphere, including within political discourse
- Support policies that aim to eliminate unequal treatment of immigrant communities and communities of color, including anti-profiling, anti-discrimination, anti-bias-based bullying, and robust hate crimes measures
- Issue statements that condemn bias-motivated violence and discrimination against immigrant communities and communities of color and promote diversity, inclusion, and religious freedom
- Develop relationships and foster dialogue with immigrant communities and communities of color to better understand our perspectives, needs, and contributions

Signed By: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Information (Phone/Email): \_\_\_\_\_

*Please print out and return the signed pledge to South Asian Americans Leading Together (SAALT) by email ([america4all@saalt.org](mailto:america4all@saalt.org)); fax (301-270-1882) or mail (6930 Carroll Avenue, Suite 506, Takoma Park, MD 20912).*

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## Appendix D: Letter to the Editor Example

### Edison is For Everyone

Joel Stein's take on how immigration patterns have changed the landscape of Edison, New Jersey ("My Own Private India", July 5, 2010) is offensive and misinformed, and definitely not funny. Relying on economic and educational stereotypes, Mr. Stein provides a cursory history of Indian immigration to Edison that neglects to mention how Indian businesses, families, and entrepreneurs have contributed to the revitalization of the economy and the cultural fabric in New Jersey for decades. Most offensive is Mr. Stein's flippant characterization of the horrible hate crimes that Indians endured in the 1980s at the hands of the New Jersey Dotbusters in the 1980s. Why is it that Mr. Stein has a bone to pick with Indian immigrants, whose presence, experiences, and contributions mirror those of Irish and Italian immigrants in New Jersey? South Asians have been an integral part of this country's fabric since the 1800's, and the vibrant immigrant community that they are part of in Edison should be celebrated rather than derided.

- Deepa Iyer, Executive Director, South Asian Americans Leading Together

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## Appendix E: Opinion Editorial Example

### 25 Years On, We Must Mark MLK Jr. Day by Continuing His Struggle

Twenty-five years ago, the United States began celebrating Martin Luther King, Jr. Day to commemorate the civil rights icon's struggle towards equality and justice. As we approach the day, we, as Americans must ask ourselves whether the country we live in meets Dr. King's dream of a great nation where people of all backgrounds are treated fairly and where there is tolerance for all beliefs and opinions.

The recent attack on Congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords of Arizona is a stark realization that perhaps that Dr. King's dream must be revived and redeemed to build a more tolerant and equitable America for all of us.

As details of the attack emerge, one can only question whether or not the motive behind this attack is a toxic side effect of a society being torn apart by hate and rhetoric, sometimes leading to violence. Unfortunately for many communities, such incendiary language has become all too common. In September 2010, Renee Ellmers, candidate for U.S. Congress in North Carolina, released a television advertisement regarding the Park51 Cultural Center in Lower Manhattan. In the ad, she equated the Muslim developers of Park51 with terrorists, and stated that "after the Muslims conquered Jerusalem, and Cordoba, and Constantinople they built victory mosques... now, they want to build a mosque by Ground Zero." In another example, as part of his Congressional campaign, Dan Fanelli encouraged Florida voters to support him because he would ensure the use of racial profiling in airport security screening. In April 2010, Fanelli posted several videos on his website depicting Arab- and South Asian-looking actors as terrorists with an accompanying statement that "all passengers are NOT created equally."

The impact of such rhetoric is profound and dangerous. In the wake of the Park51 controversy, several religiously- and racially-motivated violent attacks occurred, including the vicious stabbing of Bangladeshi taxicab driver in New York, Ahmed Sharif, and an assault on a turbaned Sikh convenience store clerk in Washington State. Mosques in California, Connecticut, Illinois, Michigan and New York were vandalized and Quran burnings were planned in Florida and occurred elsewhere in the country.

Over the past decade, numerous laws were also created in an effort to protect our nation from attacks. Yet, they have instead targeted members of vulnerable communities without showing any discernable benefits for our security. Programs such as the National Security Entry-Exit Registration System (NSEERS) required male nationals from a number of Muslim-majority nations to register with authorities. While this program was ostensibly under the banner of national security, among those who were apprehended, not a single individual was charged with a terrorism-related crime. Instead, nearly 14,000 men were placed in deportation proceedings. This measure decimated South Asian and Arab American communities, tearing apart countless families and leaving neighborhoods deserted.

Speaking to the crowd at the 1963 rally in Washington DC, Dr. King noted that for many "the quest for freedom has left [them] battered by the storms of persecution and staggered by the winds of...brutality." Today, this brutality has taken the form of rhetoric, fear and hatred targeting vulnerable communities. It is up to us – Americans of all backgrounds – to echo Dr. King's struggle and ensure that we are a part of the movement for equality and fairness. As he so eloquently said, "we refuse to believe that the bank of justice is bankrupt."

*Deepa Iyer is the Executive Director of South Asian Americans Leading Together (SAALT).*

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