



## National Muslim-Jewish Advisory Council Visits Detroit

October 9, 2017 – Detroit – The Muslim-Jewish Advisory Council convened in Detroit for a day of interaction with the city’s Jewish and Muslim communities and conversations to further the Council’s mission. The Council reaffirmed its commitment to combat the rise in hate crimes and to speak out against hate speech in ways that bring our country together.

“Detroit is an exemplary model for what can be done when Jews and Muslims come together in pursuit of shared interests and goals,” said Robert Silverman, AJC Director of Muslim-Jewish Relations. The Muslim-Jewish Advisory Council brings together recognized business, political, and religious leaders in the Jewish and Muslim American communities to jointly advocate on issues of common concern. Stanley Bergman, CEO of Henry Schein, and Farooq Kathwari, Chairman and CEO of Ethan Allen, are the Council’s co-chairs. American Jewish Committee (AJC) and Islamic Society of North America (ISNA) are co-conveners of the Council.

In Detroit the Council held its sixth face-to-face meeting since its founding last November. Senior officials from the U.S. Attorney’s Office of the Eastern District of Michigan attended. Council members visited the Arab American National Museum, celebrated the completion of a mosaic project erected by a diverse group of Detroit students at the Northwest Activities Center (formerly the site of a Jewish Community Center), and participated in a town hall with the Michigan Muslim Community Council (MMCC) and the Jewish Community Relations Council/AJC of Detroit.

Since its founding the national Muslim-Jewish Advisory Council has convened twice in Washington, D.C., to advocate for strengthening hate crimes legislation, the free exercise of religion for all Americans, and promoting a positive image of religious minorities in the U.S. The Council is calling for U.S. House and Senate passage of the bipartisan Protecting Religiously Affiliated Institutions Act of 2017.

The Detroit visit came several weeks after the Council convened at the Aspen Institute Wye River Conference Center for a weekend retreat, where members engaged in intensive conversations about the Council’s mission, accomplishments to date, advocacy agenda, and future plans. AJC and ISNA have long been involved in fostering Muslim-Jewish understanding and cooperation nationally and in Detroit.

A 2014 survey, *Building a Shared Future: Understanding the Muslim and Jewish Communities of Southeast Michigan*, revealed high levels of interest in learning more about the other, finding ways to experience each community’s practices and customs, and engaging in joint activities. The survey, co-sponsored by AJC, MMCC, and the Institute for Social Policy and Understanding, was carried out by the University of Michigan-Dearborn.

The Ravitz Foundation generously supported the survey as well as the Council’s day in Detroit on October 3.