



March 20, 2024

Mayor Rico Medina  
567 El Camino Real  
San Bruno, CA 94066

Dear Mayor Medina,

I am writing on behalf of the San Francisco Bay Area office of the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), the nation's largest Muslim civil rights and advocacy organization. Our mission is to promote justice, enhance the understanding of Islam, and empower American Muslims.

Our office recently received disturbing reports of actions taken against Muslim residents who attended the March 12 city council meeting. As the meeting coincided with the second night of Ramadan, a month-long religious observance in which Muslims fast from dawn to dusk, the residents had previously requested accommodations for fasting community members to break their fast and pray in the lobby. City staff reportedly denied their request mere hours before the meeting, stating that city policy prohibits food in the lobby—despite the presence of a vending machine, a kiosk for snacks and pastries, and an area to congregate. Rather than making reasonable accommodations for Muslim constituents, city staff reportedly placed a table outside in the cold with a set of cones surrounding it. Fasting constituents were instructed to break their fast and make their prayer outside, surrounded by police presence.

We are concerned about these reports and the implications these alleged actions will have on longer-term civic engagement.

These reports follow prior concerns raised by San Bruno residents who have felt disregarded in their earnest attempt to engage the council in dialogue after they:

- Placed partitions in City Hall to separate themselves from their constituents.
- Increased uniformed police presence.
- Reportedly perpetuated Islamophobic tropes to reject the requests of those they represent.

The actions taken at the March 12 meeting appear targeted and rooted in intimidation tactics to silence Palestinians, Muslims, Arabs, and their allies in San Bruno. Actions like these send a message that the city of San Bruno does not value or welcome these constituents, who contribute in myriad ways to the city's rich tapestry and local economy.

We believe it is critical for the city of San Bruno and San Bruno Police Department to:

- Issue a public apology to the community.
- Explain which, if any, city policies were used to make this decision.
- Commit to reject Islamophobia in the strongest of terms.
- Participate in Islamophobia training to foster cultural understanding and inclusivity.

We look forward to the city's response and commitment to more positive interactions with its residents.

Sincerely,

Musa Tariq  
Policy Coordinator  
CAIR San Francisco Bay Area

WASHINGTON D.C.

ALABAMA • ARIZONA • CALIFORNIA • CONNECTICUT • FLORIDA • GEORGIA • ILLINOIS • KANSAS • MARYLAND • MASSACHUSETTS  
MICHIGAN • MINNESOTA • MISSOURI • NEW JERSEY • NEW YORK • OHIO • OREGON • PENNSYLVANIA • TEXAS • WASHINGTON