



**Jewish Community
Relations Council**

MILWAUKEE
JEWISH FEDERATION

For immediate release

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Jewish Community Relations Council supports proposed mosque

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Milwaukee - The Milwaukee Jewish community expresses unwavering support for the Islamic Society of Milwaukee's right to build a mosque in Brookfield. Throughout our history, the American Jewish community has too often faced opposition as we have sought to build or expand Jewish properties, and we stand firmly against any unreasonable barriers placed before other faith communities as they seek to build their houses of worship. Such barriers have sometimes been used to mask intolerance and prejudice, and it is our duty, as people of good will, to defend the free practice of faith and religion.

In his 1790 letter to the Hebrew Congregation at Newport, Rhode Island, then President George Washington wrote: "It is now no more that toleration is spoken of as if it were the indulgence of one class of people that another enjoyed the exercise of their inherent natural rights, for, happily, the Government of the United States, which gives to bigotry no sanction, to persecution no assistance, requires only that they who live under its protection should demean themselves as good citizens in giving it on all occasions their effectual support."

Our communities, microcosms of the entire nation, are built on the bedrock value of tolerance and respect, for the familiar among us and also for those cultures and faiths with which we are less familiar.

We echo President Washington's wish from 1790 and extend it to all those who make up our diverse community: May all "who dwell in this land continue to merit and enjoy the good will of the other inhabitants – while every one shall sit in safety under his own vine and fig tree and there shall be none to make him afraid."