

Anti-Muslim acts down, but profiling up: Leader recommends that officials condemn anti-Muslim bias

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Anti-Muslim discrimination reached an all-time high in 2007, according to a report released by the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR).

The District of Columbia and just nine states account for 80 percent of the civil rights complaints. California leads with one in five of the complaints, followed by Washington, D.C., and Illinois. The prime reasons for discrimination are an individual's ethnicity, religion or "Muslim name," according to the report.

The report said incidents of due-process issues, physical violence, denials of service or access, and verbal harassment decreased last year, but passenger profiling reports increased by 340 percent. Claims of workplace discrimination increased by 18 percent, the report said.

Corey Saylor, CAIR's national legislative director and author of the report, said the number of anti-Muslim hate crimes—defined as any crime against property or person where the victim is selected because of a perceived faith—decreased in 2007.

"We are cautiously optimistic," said Saylor. "We hope the wave of anti-Muslim hate crimes we've seen through the years is starting to level off."

Saylor recommended asking elected officials and other public officials to condemn anti-Muslim bias. "When authority figures are sending positive messages about Islam," he said, "we find that people are less inclined to go out and commit anti-Muslim discrimination." *-Religion News Service*