

Dear Respected Mayor Crombie and Respectful Members of the Mississauga City Council,

Ramadan Greetings!

I am writing you this email on behalf of thousands of Muslim Canadian Moms in Mississauga to show my respect and gratitude for this kind approval of the Bus (number 0523) ad on Hijab. As a resident of Mississauga since over a decade, raising 2 teens in Mississauga Public Schools, this ad meant a lot to me and my Hijab wearing teens.

During the currently charged environment of hate, discrimination and division this ad made me, and thousands of other women feel that we belong and respected in our own City. Mississauga is home to many immigrant Canadians coming Pakistan (where I come from), India, Egypt, Somalia, Turkey, Indonesia, Malaysia, Afghanistan, Syria, Jordan, Bahrain, Iran, Britain, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Algeria, Morocco and many others. Women, in many of these countries might have fled to call Mississauga home' it's reassuring to have a Council full of people who respect these choices of women regardless of how different they look.

As an immigrant Hijab wearing woman living in Mississauga, I know that many of the women who choose to wear hijab live in fear of segregation, alienation, hate and even hate crimes. A lot of young girls in school, work places, roads and community settings go through verbal, physical and emotional abuse based on their attire everyday that goes completely unreported. This ad is important to these women and girls due to so many different reasons:

- It was really reassuring to see this ad on a Mi-Way bus. It gave a direct signal of belonging to 100s of Hijab wearing Muslims women and young girls that while bigots tell them to "go home", Mississauga is their home.
- It gave a real sense of inclusivity to women who use Mi-Way day in and day out, that I am respected as a woman regardless of my choice of attire.
- It provided a real opportunity to reduce (if not eliminate) the anxiety for young and old men who treat women with disrespect just because "they look different".

Why do Muslim women wear the hijab?

Hijab is a form of modesty and a religious obligation on Muslim women. Practicing women wear Hijab to please Allah SWT (God Almighty) with their obedience to HIM as the Creator. Contrary to the claims of bigots and ignorant propaganda, Hijab is not a political, cultural or social attire. Hijab, instead is more like a uniform for Muslim women (and women of other Abrahamic faiths as a matter of fact) to provide identity as an order in Quran.

Hijab is an identity feature for believing women that didn't start with Islam, its rooted in many faiths and cultures. Hijab is not a piece of fabric on one's head, it's a complete life style of a women. When a woman wears hijab, it's a form of oath she takes on with God Almighty to obey HIM:

- Being modest
- Being determined
- Being free from worldly ties
- Being honest with other humans
- Being compassionate
- Protecting her chastity
- Respecting her identity
- Disregarding the fake demands/ standards of beauty today
- Practicing her faith boldly
- Being an ambassador of her faith

Please find attached a detailed paper of Islamic position on Hijab from references of Quran.

It was a real feeling of gratitude that I write this email with to the entire Council of Mississauga and I would like to invite the Council members to look for a positive impact for this kind gesture. Thank you for your time and attention to my email.

Sincerely,

Farina Siddiqui

Resident Mississauga Ward 11