

**Westchester Coalition against Islamophobia
7 Saxon Wood Rd.
White Plains, NY 10605**

**Memorandum in Support of the New York Electronic Communications Privacy Act
(A.09235-Dinowitz)**

SUBJECT: Relates to creating the New York electronic communications privacy act; relates to the search and seizure of electronic devices and electronic communications.

The Westchester Coalition against Islamophobia strongly supports A. 09235, the New York Electronic Communications Privacy Act (NYECPA).

The Westchester Coalition against Islamophobia (WCAI) is a grassroots association of concerned individuals, non-Muslim and Muslim, committed to opposing bigotry and discrimination against Islam and Muslims and to defending the civil rights of all. Through public education, engagement with social service, peace and justice, faith-based and interfaith organizations, and outreach to public officials, we seek to assure that our Muslim neighbors feel secure in their physical safety and their fundamental human rights. We urge county residents, government officials, community organizers, and clergy to express solidarity with Westchester's Muslims, reaffirm respect for all religious traditions, reject ethnic and religious prejudice, and defend the Constitutional protections that are the bedrock of American democracy.

While technology has advanced exponentially, state and federal privacy laws remain largely unchanged. As a result, there is a lack of clarity about when and how the government can gain access to digital data and what type of oversight is necessary. Public confidence in technology has also been damaged. Polls consistently show that an overwhelming majority of Americans believe their email messages, text messages, and location information are sensitive and disapprove of government monitoring and collection of this digital data. People should not have to choose between new technology and services or keeping their personal and digital lives private. It is important that constitutional protections of physical contents extend to digital data that reveals who we are, where we go, whom we know, and what we do.

A. 09235 will modernize New York's privacy laws by providing, stronger and more balanced protections of digital information. The bill requires law enforcement to obtain a warrant before physically or electronically accessing digital data. It also includes reasonable transparency, enforcement and oversight measures that allow law enforcement to access effective investigatory tools and protect the public's privacy rights, whether in cyberspace or physical-space.

The Westchester Coalition against Islamophobia urges the New York State Legislature to pass the New York Electronic Communications Privacy Act, A. 09235, so that New York's privacy laws reflect our modern digital age.

Submitted by:



Priscilla Read, Secretary
Westchester Coalition against Islamophobia