

*Administration of Joseph R. Biden, Jr., 2024*

**Statement on the First Anniversary of the Death of Wadee Alfayoumi in Plainfield, Illinois**

*October 14, 2024*

On October 14, 1 year ago today, 6-year-old Wadee Alfayoumi, a bright and cheerful American Muslim boy of Palestinian descent, was brutally killed in his family's home in Plainfield, Illinois. The attacker also repeatedly stabbed and seriously wounded Wadee's mother, Hanan Shaheen, resulting in murder, attempted murder, and hate crime charges in Illinois. After this heinous attack, Jill and I spoke with their family, as did Vice President Harris. We joined Americans from across the country in expressing our horror and offering our condolences and prayers.

One year later, we continue to think about them. We are grateful for Hanan's recovery and her powerful voice for peace. But we know the hole in their heart that remains without their beloved son. Days like this are hard because it brings it all back. We keep them in our hearts.

On this day, let us all take steps that honor Wadee's memory and reaffirm together that there is no place for hate in America, including hatred of Palestinians, Arabs, and Muslims. We can all reject hatred and expose misinformation and disinformation that is cynically aimed at turning us against one another. We can all reach across divides of background and belief to create greater understanding and unity in our country. No one in this country should be subjected to violence or hateful and dehumanizing rhetoric simply because of who they are. No one of any background in this country should be made to feel unsafe in America.

Today we also reaffirm our commitment to mobilize government to counter hate in all its forms. In May 2021, I signed into law the COVID-19 Hate Crimes Act, which includes the Khalid Jabara and Heather Heyer NO HATE Act, to enhance hate crime data collection and provide community-centered solutions to assist hate crime victims and their communities. The Federal Bureau of Investigation has elevated hate crimes and criminal civil rights violations to its highest level national threat priority, which has increased the resources for hate crimes prevention and investigations and made hate crimes a focus for all of the Bureau's field offices. My administration will continue to spare no effort in countering hate in all its forms.

Together, we must work to end acts of senseless violence and stand united in support of all of our fellow Americans, no matter their race, ethnicity, or creed. May we summon the courage and the strength to do so.

May God bless Wadee Alfayoumi and his family.

NOTE: The statement referred to Joseph Czuba, the suspect in the stabbing; and Odai Alfayoumi, father, and Mahmoud Yousef, uncle, of Wadee Alfayoumi.

*Categories:* Statements by the President : Wadee Alfayoumi, first anniversary of death.

*Names:* Al-Fayoume, Oday; Biden, Jill T.; Czuba, Joseph; Harris, Kamala D.; Shaheen, Hanan; Yousef, Mahmoud.

*Subjects:* Federal Bureau of Investigation; Hate-based violence, efforts to combat; Illinois, 2023 stabbing in Plainfield; Islamophobia and other religious discrimination, efforts to combat; Vice President; Wadee Alfayoumi, first anniversary of death.

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