MICHIGAN OFFICE
American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee
930 Mason Street, Suite 101
Dearborn, Michigan 48124
Tel: 313.581.1201 • *Fax:* 313.581.1604
www.adcmich.org
***Fatina Abdrabboh**, Director*

NATIONAL OFFICE
American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee
1990 M Street NW, Suite 610
Washington, DC 20036
Tel: 202.244.2990
Fax: 202.333.3980
www.adc.org

March 31, 2016

Mark S. Schlissel
President
University of Michigan
500 S. State Street
Ann Arbor, MI 48109 USA

RE: Addressing Islamophobia and hate speech on the University of Michigan campus

Dear President Schlissel,

On behalf the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee Michigan Office (ADC Michigan), I am writing to you today to have a conversation about Islamophobia on the University of Michigan campus. On Wednesday, March 30th, a UM student contacted ADC Michigan to report that several "Stop Islam" messages were found written on the UM campus, including a very prominent "Stop Islam" message in the main square of campus. ADC is concerned that if not properly addressed, these messages of could foster a climate of hate and fear on the UM campus, particularly considering the current political climate and the rise of anti-Muslim rhetoric by politicians such as Donald Trump and Ted Cruz.

I encourage you to not only condemn this hate speech, but to also use the incident as an opportunity to promote diversity and tolerance on campus. There are many Muslim students at UM who are legitimately afraid that they could be targeted for hate crimes simply because of their religion. Additionally, there are many Arab Christians and other students of diverse backgrounds who could be targeted simply because they are perceived to be Muslim or Middle Eastern. In a recent letter, you stated that "diversity, equity and inclusion" are a major focus of your presidency. Further, in your email to students addressing the hate speech you reaffirmed your commitment to "fostering an environment that is welcoming and inclusive of everyone." I encourage you to follow through with this commitment by providing these students with a forum where they can share their fears and concerns, such as a town hall style discussion on the incident. Students need a safe space where they can share their concerns, and they need to feel that the University is on their side and will work to foster inclusion and protect them from hate and bigotry.

I would welcome the opportunity to work with you in facilitating a discussion of Islamophobia on campus, as well as organizing educational awareness and diversity programs. Please give this matter the proper attention that it deserves. You can contact me at 313-510-5832 or fatina@adc.org.

Sincerely,

Fatina Abdrabboh

FatinaAbdrabboh, Director
Arab American Anti Discrimination Committee, Michigan Regional Office