

AB 2017 (Haney): California State Holiday Act



CAIR-CA Position: SUPPORT (Co-Sponsor)

Summary

AB 2017 would recognize Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha as official California state holidays and ensure students and state employees observing these holidays receive excused absences.

It affirms the right of California's Muslim community to fully participate in their religious practices without facing academic or professional penalties.

This bill represents a critical step toward religious equity, inclusion, and equal access to public life.

Background and Problem

California is home to one of the largest Muslim populations in the country—surpassing over one million individuals—yet Muslim communities remain systematically underrecognized in state policy. Additionally, California already recognizes other significant cultural observances, such as Lunar New Year and Diwali.

In Islam, both Eid days are some of the most sacred days of the year. Yet many Muslim students are forced to make an impossible choice: Practice their faith fully or meet academic expectations and avoid falling behind.

This results in:

- Missed instructional time and unequal academic impact.
- Feelings of exclusion and invisibility.
- A broader message that Muslim identities are not fully valued in public institutions.

Employees face similar barriers, often having to use limited leave or forgo meaningful religious observance altogether.

At its core, this is a civil rights and equity issue, one that reflects whether California's policies truly serve all of its communities.

Solution

AB 2017 advances equity by:

- Formally recognizing Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha as state holidays.
- Guaranteeing excused absences for students and employees observing Eid.
- Allowing schools and institutions to accommodate Eid observance without penalty.
- Providing a framework for inclusive and equitable holiday recognition across California.

This bill brings California in line with its values of diversity and inclusion, while also aligning with jurisdictions across the country that already recognize Eid.

Support

- Council on American-Islamic Relations, California (Co-Sponsor)
- Commission on Asian and Pacific Islander American Affairs (Co-Sponsor)
- Muslim Impact Council (Co-Sponsor)