



State of New York
Executive Chamber
Albany 12224

Andrew M. Cuomo
GOVERNOR

November 20, 2016

Dear Students:

After the harsh and ugly rhetoric of the campaign, many of you are concerned about what might happen next.

Let me be clear: This is the State of New York, not a state of fear. We will not tolerate hate or racism.

We have been and always will be a place where people of many backgrounds have come to seek freedom and opportunity. Almost all who live here can trace their roots to someplace else.

We cherish our diversity. We find strength in our differences. Whether you are gay or straight, Muslim or Christian or Jewish or Buddhist, rich or poor, black or white or Latino or Asian, man or woman, cisgender or transgender, we respect all people in the State of New York.

The Statue of Liberty is a proud symbol of American values, and she stands in our harbor. We feel a special responsibility to make her offer of refuge and hope a reality every day.

As long as you are here, you are New Yorkers. You are members of our community, and we will stand up for you.

The State of New York has strict laws against hate crimes and discrimination and we fully and firmly enforce them. It is illegal in this state to target, harass or discriminate against a person because of his or her race, color, national origin, ancestry, gender, religion, religious practice, age, disability or sexual orientation. We are a tolerant people, and cannot and will not let our freedoms be undermined.

New York State has a toll-free hotline where people can report incidents of bias and discrimination. Our responsibility is to protect all who are here, whether native-born or immigrant, whether documented or not. The hotline strengthens our efforts. Contacting us will not affect your immigration status.

New Yorkers who have experienced bias or discrimination should call the toll-free hotline at [\(888\) 392-3644](tel:888-392-3644) from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday - Friday.

If you want to report a crime or fear for your safety, call 911 immediately.

New Yorkers feel a particular affection for young immigrants. For centuries, our state has thrived on the energy and ambition of the young people seeking to build their lives here. Your intelligence, your creativity, your idealism enriches us all. You are welcome here.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Andrew M. Cuomo". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "A" and "C".

ANDREW M. CUOMO