



Los Angeles County Commission on Human Relations
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Statement of the Los Angeles County Commission on Human Relations
on the Passing of Dr. Maher Hathout

Members of the Los Angeles County Commission on Human Relations met on Monday, January 5, 2015, and unanimously supported issuing a statement on the recent passing of Dr. Maher Hathout, who received the Commission's prestigious John Allen Buggs Leadership Award in 2006.

The John Allen Buggs Award was named after a former Human Relations Commission Executive Director, and is given to individuals who have shown extraordinary leadership in human relations in Los Angeles County.

Dr. Hathout was chosen for his dedication to advancing human and civil rights, and for building bridges of understanding between American Muslim, Christian and Jewish communities. As the LA Times noted, "[Dr. Hathout] spoke with presidents Bill Clinton and George W. Bush about improving relations with the Muslim world and authored books that undermined Islamic justification for terrorism." Dr. Hathout was ahead of his time in supporting women and youth participation, as well as English language use, at the Islamic Center of Southern California, where he was a leader, and at the Muslim Public Affairs Council, which he co-founded.

As was noted in the award letter sent in August 2006 by the Commission to Dr. Hathout, "Your writings, media appearances, and extensive participation in interfaith coalitions - whether to educate what it means to be an American Muslim, on condemning terrorism and hate crime, or to find common ground in making our communities a better place to live for all - have had a positive impact on intergroup relations in our county."

The move was not without controversy, yet the Commission voted to confirm its selection of Dr. Hathout, who received that award to a standing ovation at the annual John Anson Ford Human Relations Awards Luncheon on Thursday, October 5, 2006 at the Millennium Biltmore Hotel in downtown Los Angeles.

The Commission extends its sincerest condolences to the family of Dr. Hathout, and honors his interfaith legacy of seeking peace and justice among Muslims, Jews and Christians in L.A. County and beyond.