

# **Philadelphia's Elected Leaders Put Themselves and Islam Ahead of Civic Duty**

by [Leonard Getz](#) (February 2021)



*The Meddler in Purple*, Arturo Morin

Last year, the Philadelphia chapter of the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) [celebrated](#) six Muslim

Americans elected to public office in the Greater Philadelphia area. Yet, as with CAIR, several of these lawmakers are Islamists who do not reflect the values of the city's dynamic Muslim community. Some have been involved in corruption, including accusations of [theft](#) and [charity embezzlement](#), while others have used their political privilege to promote an Islamist agenda.

Philadelphia has been [called](#) "the most corrupt city in America," where dozens of politicians and power brokers have been convicted in the past decade on charges of bribery and corruption. Until recently, Islamists have only [gamed](#) this corrupt system from the outside, but now groups such as CAIR can rely on political representatives in positions of power to advance their extremist agenda.

Former State Rep. Movita Johnson-Harrell (*right*) is chief among the city's corrupt Islamist politicians. After winning a [special election](#) in March 2019, the Muslim Democrat's political career ended in shame less than a year later with multiple felony convictions.



In January 2020, a [disgraced](#) Johnson-Harrell was sentenced to three months in prison for embezzling over \$500,000 from her nonprofit, which was established to assist the poor, homeless, and addicted. She spent this money on fur coats, lavish vacations, and even a political donation.

When Johnson-Harrell wasn't busy enriching herself from her charity, she spent much of her short-lived career as a state assemblywoman galavanting from coast to coast to [raise money](#) for CAIR, an Islamist civil rights organization identified in [federal court](#) as an affiliate of the terrorist

group Hamas. Attending multiple CAIR fundraisers, Johnson-Harrell praised fellow speakers such as [Marc Lamont Hill](#), a former CNN analyst who was [fired](#) from the network after unapologetically calling for the destruction of Israel.

In 2019, Johnson-Harrell attended a [convention](#) in Philadelphia organized by the Muslim Ummah of North America (MUNA), where she [called on Muslims](#) to “occupy every space of this world.” MUNA is a nonprofit closely linked to the Bangladeshi branch of Jamaat-e-Islami, a violent South Asian Islamist movement.

Philadelphia City Councilman Curtis Jones, Jr. (*right*) has used his official position to advance an Islamist agenda. In 2016, Jones [hosted](#) and promoted an event at City Hall titled, “Thomas Jefferson’s Quran: Islam and The Founders.” In addition to CAIR, the event was sponsored by Engage PAC, an Islamist Political Action Committee known for hosting [conventions](#) at [terror-tied mosques](#) and featuring anti-Semitic [speakers](#).



Incidentally, Jones’s wife Jazelle is the city’s Deputy Manager and Director of Operations for Special Events.

While Jones has eagerly sponsored resolutions condemning anti-Muslim bias, he has ignored blatant examples of anti-Semitism. In January 2017, he hosted a townhall [meeting](#) with CAIR-Philadelphia to introduce [Resolution 161119](#) condemning the “alarming increase in anti-Muslim violence and hate speech in the wake of the November election.”

However, as a board member of the Philadelphia Human Relations Commission (PHRC), Jones was asked (by this writer) but refused to censure the Philadelphia chapter of the Muslim

American Society (MAS) for propagating anti-Semitic hate speech. In 2019, an Islamic school under MAS administration produced a [video](#) of Muslim children singing about torturing and beheading Jews, and PCHR responded by calling the scandal a “mistake.” The commission’s failure to take action attracted the attention of U.S. Congressman Lee Zeldin (R-NY), who believes that PHRC [whitewashed](#) the investigation.

The city’s corruption problem may even extend to local law enforcement. Philadelphia Sheriff Rochelle Bilal (*right*) campaigned on a [promise](#) to rid the office of previous bribery and sexual harassment scandals. However, she wasted no time [firing](#) her office’s Chief Financial Officer Brett Mandel, allegedly for questioning her six figure “off budget” payments to four contractors who worked on her campaign. The *Philadelphia Inquirer* [admonished](#) her actions as contrary to her commitment to “operate the office with transparency and integrity on behalf of all of the citizens of our city.”



Apparently, this was not Bilal’s first impropriety. In 2013, the City of Philadelphia Internal Affairs determined that she [violated](#) the department’s conflict of interest policy by taking a job with the Delaware County borough of Colwyn as public safety director. This resulted in her resigning from the police force.

Finally, Sheikh M. Siddique (*right*) was elected to the Upper Darby Township Council despite serious accusations of theft from local Muslims. The Masjid Al-Madinah Mosque, where Siddique serves as vice president, [accused](#) him of stealing over \$17,000 in donations earmarked for a widow, taking \$9,000 meant for a “family in need,” and diverting money set aside for a Ramadan food drive, using it to visit Bangladesh. He was also deemed responsible for destroying charity request forms and “[abusing](#)” the mosque as a storage area.



“I am going to complain about your councilman—he is corrupt” mosque member Kamruzzman Khan shouted at a township council [meeting](#). “Shiekh Siddique, he took the money from our safe without any permission. We have the proof—we have the videotapes,” he said.

Siddique [refused](#) to tender his resignation from Al-Madinah and pleaded innocent to all charges. Nevertheless, the district attorney’s office is currently investigating the charges, and Siddique still sits as councilman of Upper Darby Township.

The unfortunate common thread among these elected officials is their devotion to themselves and to Islamism. What Philadelphia needs is responsible Muslim leadership that reflects the vibrant Muslim community that prioritizes good governance over Islamism, to replace what Philadelphia has today.

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