

[Reform Jewish Movement Welcomes Approval of Cordoba House Mosque and Community Center](#)

Yoffie and Saperstein: *"The principles of religious freedom on which the United States was founded have demonstrated that our nation is strengthened by the faith of its citizens and the houses of worship in which they gather."*

Contact: Eric Harris
202.387.2800 | news@rac.org

NEW YORK, August 4, 2010 -- In response to the New York City Landmarks Preservation Committee's unanimous vote allowing the building of the Cordoba House mosque and community center, Rabbi Eric Yoffie, President of the Union for Reform Judaism, and Rabbi David Saperstein, Director of the Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism, issued the following statement:

We welcome the planned construction of the Cordoba House mosque and community center in Lower Manhattan. Although we fully recognize the strong sentiments that have characterized the debate over the center, we strongly believe that Cordoba House's presence will reflect our nation's historic commitment to religious liberty. After consulting with rabbinic and lay leaders of our New York area synagogues we express our belief that the decision to allow the Cordoba House to move forward best embodies our values and the interests of the New York community. We affirm our abiding commitment to the principle of religious freedom that ensures that houses of worship not be subject to discrimination and to the principle of religious equality that ensures the right of the Moslem community to locate and build its houses of worship like Jewish, Christian or other houses of worship. We hope that our congregations will work with the leadership of the center on issues of common importance.

We commend Mayor Bloomberg, who has always supported the rights of the Jewish community as he has those of all religious communities, for advocating the position that the New York community will be enriched by this Center and for his view that New York should not embody in its actions any form of religious intolerance or discrimination. We commend as well the decision yesterday of the Landmarks Preservation Committee paving the way for construction.

The principle of religious freedom on which the United States was founded has demonstrated that our nation is strengthened by the faith of its citizens and the houses of worship in which they gather. The Cordoba House will now join the countless churches, synagogues, mosques, and temples that populate our landscape and enrich the spiritual lives of their congregants.

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The Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism is the Washington office of the Union for Reform Judaism, whose more than 900 congregations across North America encompass 1.5 million Reform Jews, and the Central Conference of American Rabbis, whose membership includes more than 1,800 Reform rabbis. Visit www.rac.org for more.