



### **Statement on Promoting Unity and Our Shared Values:**

The Community Relations Council of the Jewish Federation of the Lehigh Valley joins with millions of Americans, President Obama, and Secretary Clinton in congratulating President-elect Donald Trump and Vice President-elect Mike Pence upon their election. American democracy is the envy for citizen participation and now a civil transition of power is underway.

This election season, however, was hallmarked by a polarized America which found fault in both leading candidates. Wounds were widened by divisive and hateful language along the lines of race, religion, gender, ethnicity, class, and social status.

As a community, as a country, we are called to begin the difficult work of healing those wounds that threaten to pull our nation asunder, and to remain vigilant in promoting our nation's commitment to civil liberties, equality under the law, and social justice -- the mighty pillars on which our nation stands.

We welcome President-elect Trump's pledge that he will be president for all Americans, and that he will seek the common ground and reconciliation that has been the hallmark of American elections and the transitions that follow. We call upon President Obama, President-elect Trump, and all of our leaders, to take a forceful, outspoken stand against divisive actions and hate-speech, and work to encourage mutual respect and civil discourse. Our government, likewise, should be comprised of elected and appointed individuals, and fortified by legislation, which reflect the guiding values of our nation: tolerance, justice, freedom, and respect for all people. We pray that the worst rhetoric and hatefulness we have recently experienced in the campaigns and beyond will not become the policy of any presidential administration or legislation.

We are heartened by President-elect Trump's vocal support for a strong Israel and encourage him to use his office to work for peace between the Palestinians and Israelis, and the dignity of all those who live in the region.

For some the election brought elation. For others the election resulted in disappointment. Our unity does not mean that we always agree; it means that we should never lose sight of our shared goals and values. As after every election, we look forward to working with our elected officials -- local, state, and federal -- to continue the vision of our founders in our collective efforts of a more perfect union.

**Jewish Federation of the Lehigh Valley**

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