



April 8, 2021

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## Coalition Letter Encouraging Bipartisan Support for the Khalid Jabara and Heather Heyer NO HATE Act

Dear Member of Congress,

We, the undersigned organizations, write to express support for the Khalid Jabara and Heather Heyer National Opposition to Hate, Assault, and Threats to Equality (Jabara-Heyer NO HATE Act), introduced today by Representatives Don Beyer (D-VA), Fred Upton (R-MI), Judy Chu (D-CA), and Vern Buchanan (R-FL). We look forward to Senator Richard Blumenthal's (D-CT) re-introduction of the companion bill in the Senate, where it is also supported by Senator Jerry Moran (R-Kan.). The Jabara-Heyer NO HATE Act is an important piece of legislation that would improve hate crime statistics and promote a better response to hate crime within our communities. We support this legislation at a time when hate crimes against Asian American communities as well as hate crimes against other people of color, religious minorities, immigrants, people with disabilities, and the LGBTQ community are increasing. And we support this at a time when we are all coming together to demand investments in our communities. This legislation will give us all access to the accurate data necessary to drive community centered policies that reflect the needs of people targeted for hate.

Under the Hate Crime Statistics Act of 1990 (HCSA) (28 U.S.C. 534 note), which Congress passed with overwhelming bipartisan support, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) collects data on hate crimes reported by state and local law enforcement agencies. According to the FBI, state and local law enforcement agencies reported 7,314 hate crime incidents in 2019, the most recent year for which data is available from the FBI, including a record high 51 hate crimes murders. Indeed, 2019 marks the deadliest year on record since the hate crimes reporting program started in 1991. This is especially alarming considering that the number of law enforcement agencies voluntarily reporting their figures has decreased, which means the report only captures a fraction of actual incidences of hate crimes.

Annual statistics based on data collected under the HCSA provide the best picture of hate crime in American communities. However, they do not fully depict the nature and extent of the problem. The Department of Justice estimates that U.S. residents experienced an average of 204,600 hate crimes each year from 2013 to 2017, which is more than 33 times the average annual number of hate crimes collected under the HCSA during the same period. When you are a part of a community targeted for hate and see that the DOJ's FBI is reporting 7,314 hate crimes in a year at the same time the DOJ estimates that the actual number is closer to 200,000, it undermines trust. You know that government and community leaders do not have the information they need to effectively address the scourge of hate

**Interim President & CEO**

Wade Henderson

crimes. These estimates are based on survey data from the Bureau of Justice Statistics. Because the survey data do not include offenses such as intimidation or vandalism, which account for most hate crimes recorded in the HCSA data, the disparity between the survey data and the HCSA data is even more significant than what is cited above.

As we have seen demonstrated in the last few years, some of the most high-profile hate crimes, such as the 2016 murder of Khalid Jabara in Tulsa, Okla., and the 2017 murder of Heather Heyer in Charlottesville, Va., can go unreported in federal hate crime statistics. Mr. Jabara and Ms. Heyer were killed exactly one year apart, on August 12, and although their murders were prosecuted as hate crimes, they are not included in the data.

There are many reasons why an incident might not be recorded in federal hate crime statistics. For example: victims might be apprehensive to report hate crimes to law enforcement; agencies might be using outdated reporting systems; technical glitches might occur during the data submission process; or law enforcement officers might lack the proper training to identify, report, and respond to hate crimes. In the case of Tulsa and Charlottesville, the omissions were the result of one or more of these factors.

The murders of Khalid Jabara and Heather Heyer are not the only high-profile incidents to go unreported in federal hate crime statistics. That such cases get excluded from the data underscores the urgent need for reform. If even the most flagrant acts of hate violence are missing from federal statistics, we have to ask ourselves, what else are we missing? Moreover, we have to consider how inaccurate data prevent policymakers, law enforcement, and impacted communities from developing the most effective response.

Both Republican and Democratic members of Congress have raised these concerns about inaccuracies in federal hate crime statistics. Now is the time to act. The Jabara-Heyer NO HATE Act will improve our hate crime statistics and promote a better response to hate crime in our communities. Specifically, the bill would help law enforcement agencies transition to a modernized form of crime reporting, provide grants for state-run hate crime hotlines, encourage law enforcement agencies to adopt policies and programs that would improve reporting, to include effective engagement with communities targeted for hate and hate crimes training for personnel, require the Department of Justice to conduct research on hate crime reporting and data collection, and allow courts to require certain hate crime offenders to participate in community service or education programs as a condition of supervised release. These provisions would address the many factors that contribute to inaccuracies in federal hate crime statistics. Furthermore, they would improve the response to hate crime within law enforcement and the criminal-legal system, and reduce barriers to receiving support or assistance that many hate crime victims experience. Money that has already been authorized to DOJ can be reappropriated to fund these provisions.

As organizations representing communities targeted for hate, we know that the failure to capture accurate data translates into a failure to provide the support that communities need right now. Our elected officials must come together and address the problems with hate crime reporting and data collection under the HCSA. It is imperative that policymakers, law enforcement, and impacted communities have the most accurate information possible. We therefore urge you to support and cosponsor the Jabara-Heyer NO HATE Act.

Please direct all questions to Nadia Aziz, Deputy Director of the Arab American Institute, at [nadia@aaiusa.org](mailto:nadia@aaiusa.org), or 202-429-9210; or Becky Monroe, Director, Fighting Hate and Bias Program, The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, at [monroe@civilrights.org](mailto:monroe@civilrights.org).

Respectfully,

Arab American Institute  
The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights  
Act To Change  
African American Ministers In Action  
Alliance of Baptists  
American Association of University Women (AAUW)  
American Federation of Teachers  
American Jewish Committee  
American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC)  
Americans for Democratic Action (ADA)  
Amnesty International USA  
Anti-Defamation League  
Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund (AALDEF)  
Asian Americans Advancing Justice | AAJC  
Asian and Pacific Islander American Vote  
Autistic Self Advocacy Network  
B'nai B'rith International  
Center for American Progress  
Center for Common Ground  
Center for Disability Rights  
Center for the Study of Hate & Extremism - California State University, San Bernardino  
Clearinghouse on Women's Issues  
Disability Rights California  
Disciples Center for Public Witness  
Emgage  
End Citizens United / Let America Vote Action Fund  
Equality California  
Feminist Majority Foundation  
Futures Without Violence  
Girls Inc.  
Global Project Against Hate and Extremism  
Hate Is A Virus  
Hindu American Foundation  
Human Rights Campaign  
Impact Fund  
Interfaith Alliance  
Japanese American Citizens League

Jewish Council for Public Affairs  
Justice in Aging  
Lake Oconee Community Church  
Lambda Legal  
Laotian American National Alliance  
LatinoJustice PRLDEF  
Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law  
League of Women Voters of the United States  
Matthew Shepard Foundation  
Movement Advancement Project (MAP)  
Muflehun  
Muslim Advocates  
Muslim-Jewish Advisory Council  
National Action Network  
National Asian Pacific American Bar Association (NAPABA)  
National Association of Human Rights Workers  
National Black Justice Coalition  
National Council of Asian Pacific Americans (NCAPA)  
National Council of Churches  
National Council of Jewish Women  
National Council of Negro Women  
National Disability Rights Network (NDRN)  
National Equality Action Team (NEAT)  
National Indian Education Association  
National Network for Arab American Communities (NNAAC)  
National Organization for Women  
National Partnership for Women & Families  
NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice  
NIEA  
Not In Our Town  
OCA - Asian Pacific American Advocates  
People For the American Way  
PFLAG National  
Poligon Education Fund  
Public Advocacy for Kids  
Public Justice  
Public Wise  
SHK Global Health  
Sikh American Legal Defense and Education Fund (SALDEF)  
Silver State Equality-Nevada  
Sisterhood of Salaam Shalom  
Society of the Sacred Heart United States Canada Province  
South Asian Americans Leading Together



SPLC Action Fund  
TASH  
Texas Progressive Action Network  
The Sikh Coalition  
The Workers Circle  
UnidosUS  
Union for Reform Judaism  
Women's Islamic Initiative in Spirituality and Equality  
YWCA USA