

Latino Jewish Congressional Caucus Statement on the NO HATE ACT

As co-chairs of the Jewish Latino Congressional Caucus, we affirm the following:

Hate crimes do not just affect victims. Because the victim is targeted solely because of his or her race, religion, gender, or ethnicity, when an attack occurs, entire communities are put on notice. The most recent FBI report on hate crimes shows an 11.7% rise last year in the number of violent hate crimes. The number of victims in anti-Latino or Hispanic hate crimes rose over 21% in 2018. Jews were the target of a stunning 57.8 percent of all religious bias crimes in 2018, despite making up less than 2 percent of the U.S. population.

The coronavirus pandemic has brought out both the best and worst of our society. First responders, healthcare professionals, and so many frontline essential workers have indeed shown bravery in the face of fear. They have saved lives and ensured that we all have access to food, pharmaceuticals, and other necessities. Human solidarity has been on display as we face this unprecedented challenge together

However, as uncertainty rises, we have seen hatred unleashed. Conspiracy theories about the role of Jews in creating or spreading the virus swarm. Misinformation abounds. For this reason, we affirm our support for **H.R.3545, the National Opposition to Hate, Assaults, and Threats to Equality (NO HATE) Act**. The bipartisan bill will improve hate crime reporting through law enforcement training, allow for the creation of reporting hotlines, call for the increase in resources to liaise with affected communities, and promote public educational forums on hate crimes.

In 1990, Congress passed the Hate Crimes Statistics Act, which requires the Attorney General to collect data on crimes committed due to the victim's "race, gender and gender identity, religion, disability, sexual orientation, or ethnicity." For more than two decades, thousands of city, county, college and university, state, tribal, and Federal law enforcement agencies have voluntarily submitted hate crimes data to the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). The Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr., Hate Crimes Prevention Act of 2009 is the first statute allowing Federal authorities to understand, investigate, and prosecute hate crimes committed on the basis of actual or perceived "race, color, religion, national origin, gender or gender identity, sexual orientation, or disability." However, due to inaccurate and incomplete hate crime reporting, we lack a complete understanding of the national problem posed by hate crimes.

In the latest FBI report, more than 85 cities of over 100,000 residents reported zero incidents or did not report hate crimes to the agency. Syracuse, NY; Midland, TX; Hialeah, FL, are among the cities on this list. Managed through the Department of Justice (DOJ), this bill will issue grants to empower State and local governments to improve hate crimes reporting. These funds come from existing allocations and will not create new financial responsibilities for the federal government. In exchange for receiving grants, State and local governments must provide additional information pertaining to hate crimes in their jurisdiction. If they fail to do so, they must repay the grants in full. It also amends the penalties for hate crimes to allow courts to require that offenders engage in education about, or service to, the affected communities as a condition of their release from prison.

We hope that our colleagues on both sides of the aisle and in both chambers will ensure that this bill is passed and signed into law.