



LOS ANGELES COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE SACRAMENTO LEGISLATIVE OFFICE

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May 8, 2023

The Honorable Evan Low
California State Assembly
1021 O Street, Suite 6110
Sacramento, CA 95814

ASSEMBLY BILL 1064 (LOW) SUPPORT

Dear Assembly Member Low:

The Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office is pleased to support Assembly Bill 1064.

Although hate crimes make a small percentage of total reported crimes, the number of reported hate crimes in California has increased. In 2020, the Department of Justice (DOJ) reported hate crime events increased 31.0% from 1,015 in 2019 to 1,330 in 2020. The report also found hate crime offenses increased 23.9% from 1,261 in 2019 to 1,563 in 2020. According to DOJ's 2021 report on hate crimes, "hate crime events" reported to law enforcement "increased 32.6% from 1,330 in 2020 to 1,763 in 2021," and "hate crime offense increased 42.1% from 1,563 in 2020 to 2,221 in 2021." Specifically, the DOJ found that "[v]iolent [hate] crime offenses increased 47.4% from 1,088 in 2020 to 1,604 in 2021."

There is no single reason for the rise in hate crimes and hate crime violence, which is why it is so hard to effectively combat hate crime in our communities.

While current law provides appropriate guidelines when it comes to prosecution of those defendants who clearly state their intent to target an individual of a protected class, the guidelines for defining what constitutes a bias against an individual of a protected class unfortunately are not well defined.

AB 1064 will provide guidance to law enforcement and prosecutors on what is "bias motivation" in order to address the purposeful targeting of victims due to bias motivations.

AB 1064 redefines "hate crime" as a criminal act that is motivated in whole or in part by a bias against one or more actual or perceived characteristics of the victim. AB 1064 defines "bias against" as a negative attitude toward specified actual or perceived characteristics of the victim. Evidence of bias motivation may include, but is not limited to, hatred, animosity, resentment, revulsion, contempt, unreasonable fear, paranoia, callousness, thrill-seeking, desire for social dominance, desire for social bonding with those of one's "own kind," or a perception of the

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vulnerability of the victim due to the victim being perceived as being weak, worthless, or fair game, or the selective targeting of victims because of an actual or perceived characteristic of the victim.

Hate crimes not only severely impact the victims of these heinous acts but they can also have a significant impact on the communities to which a victim belongs. The psychological harm caused by these crimes is often felt by both the direct victim and the members of the targeted communities.

By providing guidance on what constitutes “bias motivation”, AB 1064 will make the prosecution of hate crimes targeting members of protected classes easier for law enforcement and will help bring justice for hate crime victims and the communities that are harmed.

For these reasons our office is pleased to support AB 1064.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please feel free to contact Daniel Felizzatto in my Sacramento Legislative Office at (916) 442-0668.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'George Gascón', written in a cursive style.

GEORGE GASCÓN
District Attorney