



Civil Rights Department • Commission on the State of Hate

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COMMISSION ON THE STATE OF HATE

Minutes

January 24, 2024, 9:00 am meeting

The Commission on the State of Hate conducted its meeting via teleconference and at the address below.

Civil Rights Department, Los Angeles Office
320 West 4th Street, Suite 1000, 10th Floor
Los Angeles, CA 90013

Commissioners Present

Chair Russell Roybal
Vice Chair Bamby Salcedo
Commissioner Cynthia Choi
Commissioner Regina Cuellar
Commissioner Andrea Beth Damsky
Commissioner Cece Feiler
Commissioner Brian Levin
Commissioner Erroll Southers

Ex-Officio Members Present

Abby Browning, Governor's Office of Emergency Services
Damon Brown, Department of Justice

Civil Rights Department Staff Present

Adam Romero, Deputy Director
Becky Monroe, Deputy Director
Rishi Khalsa, Deputy Director of Communications
Alec Watts, Assistant Deputy Director
Marquez Equalibria, Assistant Deputy Director
Alex Hernandez, Information Officer
Gregory Mann, CCRU
Christina Teixeira, CCRU
Monica Chavez, Associate Governmental Program Analyst
Rebecca Goodsell, Research Data Specialist

Others Present

An estimated 25 members of the public participated virtually.
One member of the public participated in-person.

I. Welcome

A. Call to Order

Chair Roybal called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

They welcomed everyone to the tenth meeting of the California Commission of the State of Hate. They shared that translated closed captioning is available for this meeting.

B. Establishment of a Quorum

Assistant Deputy Director Alec Watts conducted roll call.

C. Review of the Agenda

Chair Roybal reviewed the public comment process, reviewed the agenda, and noted changes to the order of items in the agenda.

II. Approval of the Minutes

Commissioner Feiler moved to approve the minutes for the December meeting; seconded by Vice Chair Salcedo.

The minutes were approved:

- Ayes: 7
- Nos: 0
- Abstain: 0

Commissioner Damsky moved to approve the minutes for the December community forum; seconded by Commissioner Southers.

The minutes were approved:

- Ayes: 7
- Nos: 0
- Abstain: 0

Commission Discussion

Commissioner Damsky suggested that the Commission consider creating a subcommittee to study hate relating to elected officials.

Commissioner Feiler acknowledged the work of CRD Assistant Deputy Director Marquez Equalbria.

III. Civil Rights Department Report

Updates provided by Deputy Director Beck Monroe:

- An overview of California vs. Hate.
- There are increased hate crime reports to CA vs. Hate
- CA vs. Hate has published new outreach materials in additional languages
- CA vs. Hate launched toolkits for libraries and museums to combat hate and foster unity.
- CA vs. Hate is engaging in more outreach with Jewish, Muslim, and Arab American communities, including webinars and roundtables.
- The EOC has a webinar on February 1 focusing on confronting bias and hate in the workplace.
- Emphasized the importance of collaborative efforts across government agencies to support victims of hate and discrimination.

Commission Discussion

Chair Roybal highlighted the CA vs. Hate Hotline as an essential resource.

Commissioner Feiler thanked Deputy Director Becky Monroe for her contributions and resources.

Vice Chair Bamby advocated for the utilization of these resources. Becky Monroe emphasized the value of community partners as significant resources.

Commissioner Southers appreciated Deputy Director Monroe for the toolkit resources, noting their benefit to the public.

Commissioner Choi emphasized ensuring access to resources for vulnerable communities.

Chair Roybal pointed out the significant role of public libraries.

IV. Informational Presentation: Hate Crime in the U.S. 2023: A Year of Broken Records Commissioner Brian Levin

Commissioner Levin presented the following:

- Highlighted the importance of reporting hate crimes and bias incidents for a comprehensive understanding of hate beyond law enforcement data.
- Emphasized the significance of leadership messages against hate from top officials and the role of model policies in combating hate crimes.

- Mentioned the underreporting of hate crimes, especially in marginalized communities, and the need for social science data for a fuller picture.
- Discussed preliminary data showing an increase in hate crimes in America's 10 largest cities in 2023, with a particular rise in anti-Jewish and anti-Muslim hate crimes.
- Noted the variability in hate crime reporting among states, with Florida and Mississippi having poor records.
- Addressed the impact of social media in spreading hate and the need for more content moderation.
- Highlighted specific increases in anti-Jewish and anti-Muslim incidents and crimes in Los Angeles.
- Stressed the connection between international events and spikes in hate crimes.
- Pointed out the generational highs in hate crimes against certain communities and the necessity of addressing generational grief and physical threats.
- Underlined the importance of continued efforts to combat hate and the role of data in understanding and addressing these issues.

Commission Discussion

Commissioner Feiler thanked Commissioner Levin for the presentation and asked about online content moderation.

Commissioner Levin highlighted the focus of governments, organizations, and individuals on this issue.

Commissioner Damsky asked about the feasibility of obtaining accurate hate crime statistics.

Commissioner Levin acknowledged research gaps but noted California's resources facilitate tracking

Damon Brown inquired if there are strategies to address these issues.

Commissioner Levin emphasized the necessity of collaborating with various organizations and communities.

Public Comment

A commenter inquired about the collection of data on intersectional hate incidents.

Another commenter expressed concerns about organizing due to fear of law enforcement and questioned strategies to address this issue.

A third participant discussed ongoing research into hate and harassment.

One commenter appreciated the Commissioners' acknowledgment of concerns about hate targeted at the undocumented community.

Another commenter expressed interest in collaborating with the Commission.

A commenter pointed out that people are being exposed to hate online.

Commissioner Comments

Vice Chair Salcedo thanked all the commentors for sharing.

Commissioner Levin responded to a point made in a public comment regarding law enforcement.

V. Chair and Subcommittees Updates and Discussion

A. Chair Russell Roybal

Updates provided by Chair Roybal:

- The Commission's first annual report is now available and has been posted to the Commission website.
- The February Commission meeting will be Thursday, February 22nd.
- The March Commission meeting will take place on Wednesday, March 20th.

B. Subcommittee on Data and Research

Updates provided by Commissioner Levin:

- The Subcommittee is collaborating with the Williams Institute to study hate crimes against transgender people and victimizations.
- There is research relating to the criminal justice system's role in hate crimes and conducting comprehensive literature reviews with various institutions.
- Emphasized expanding research from law enforcement to social sciences, with plans to utilize new data for insights.

C. Subcommittee on Policy Recommendations

Updates provided by Commissioner Choi:

- Led a discussion on the role of non-member advisors, seeking input from commissioners and emphasized the Commission's advisory role.
- Highlighted existing public engagement practices, including community forums and direct inquiries via email.
- Stressed the importance of leveraging Commissioners' experiences for meaningful input and managing expectations about the Commission's capabilities.

Commission Discussion

Commissioner Southers offered to provide a list of potential candidates for non-member advisor roles.

Vice Chair Salcedo expressed support for the idea of incorporating non-member advisors. Commissioner Levin recommended considering individuals instrumental in establishing the Commission.

Commissioners Feiler and Cuellar raised concerns about the logistics of initiating this process.

Commissioner Southers suggested examining practices of other commissions for potential templates.

Commissioner Choi mentioned that while not immediately ready to appoint non-member advisors, the Commission could begin compiling a list of names.

D. Subcommittee on Recommendations for Law Enforcement

Commissioner Southers provided an update during agenda item IV “Discussion of Content of Law Enforcement Training.”

E. Subcommittee on Community Forums

Updates provided by Commissioner Feiler:

- Highlighted collaboration with Joan B. Crock School of Peace in San Diego, addressing hate's impact on elected officials, with Mayor Todd Gloria and Senator Pro Tem Tony Atkins speaking.
- Discussed the community forums for March, May, August/September, and November.
- Emphasized that the Commission will be focusing on rural areas.

F. Subcommittee on Funding

This agenda item was skipped.

Commission Discussion

Commissioner Southers provided an update related to hate speech at public meetings, explaining that law enforcement collects that data.

Public Comment

The first Commenter discussed the issues faced by individuals with various disabilities, emphasizing that the disability community is not monolithic and intersects with all other communities.

Another Commenter emphasizing the need for educational initiatives to address the rise in intolerance.

The Commission took a break from 10:53-10:58 am.

VI. Discussion and Election of Chair

Assistant Deputy Director Watts gave an overview of the nominating and election process for the Chair.

Commissioner Levin and Chair Roybal stated their interest in running for Commission Chair.

Commissioner Levin was nominated by Commissioner Damsky. Chair Roybal was nominated by Commissioner Cuellar.

Commissioner Levin and Chair Roybal provided a one-minute statement explaining why they should be elected.

Commission Discussion

Commissioner Damsky emphasized the benefit to rotating leadership.

Commissioner Feiler highlighted the benefit to having a chair server for more than one year.

Commission Action

Assistant Deputy Director Alec Watts conducted a roll call vote

The Commission re-elected Chair Roybal to serve as Commission chair (6-2).

VII. Discussion and Election of Vice Chair

Assistant Deputy Director Alec Watts reviewed the nominating and election process for the Vice Chair position.

Commissioner Levin and Vice Chair Salcedo stated their interest in running for Commission Vice Chair. Commissioner Cuellar nominated Vice Chair Salcedo and Commissioner Damsky nominated Commissioner Levin.

Commission Discussion

Commissioner Damsky shared her reasons for endorsing Commissioner Levin.

Chair Roybal shared their gratitude for working with Vice Chair Salcedo.

Vice Chair Salcedo and Commissioner Levin provided a one-minute statement explaining why they were interested in serving as Vice Chairs.

Commission Action

The Commission re-elected Vice Chair Salcedo to serve as Commission Vice Chair (6-2).

Chair Roybal shared their gratitude for being able to serve as Chair for another year.

Commissioner Levin shared his support for Chair Roybal and Vice Chair Salcedo.

VIII. Discussion of Content of Law Enforcement Training

Information presented by Commissioner Damsky and Commissioner Southers:

- The subcommittee is creating a video training for law enforcement officials statewide about AB 449, a new law requiring the reporting of hate crimes and incidents.
- The training aims to educate law enforcement on the law's requirements, how to comply, where to find a new reporting form, and the necessity of providing their officers with training.
- The training will cover identifying hate crimes, the difference between hate crimes and incidents, the significance of data collection, and proper response techniques. It may also review strategies for engaging with communities targeted by hate, building trust, and the importance of sharing resources like the California vs. Hate initiative are discussed.
- Collaboration with California POST (Peace Officer Standards and Training) is highlighted as crucial for the training's distribution and success.
- A diverse panel, including representatives from various organizations and law enforcement, is confirmed for a three-day training session in Carlsbad, indicating a wide interest and support for the initiative.
- The effort represents a significant step toward standardized hate crime training in California, potentially serving as a model for other states and areas of law enforcement training.

Commission Discussion

Commissioner Levin expressed gratitude for the efforts made for this project.

Commissioner Cuellar asked if this video would be available to tribal officers.

Commissioner Southers responded that the video will be available for them online

Vice Chair Salcedo shared her gratitude for this project especially as there are many communities that do not feel comfortable with law enforcement.

Commissioner Damsky shared a timeline of the development and filming dates.

Assistant Deputy Director reminded the Commissioners this is the time to give feedback.

Commissioner Levin emphasized the importance of the training focusing on undocumented and disabled communities.

IX. Commission Member Announcements

There were no Commission member announcements.

X. Public Comment on Items Not on the Agenda

The Commission may not discuss or act on any matter raised during the public comment section that is not included on this agenda, except whether to decide to place the matter on the agenda of a future meeting.

Assistant Deputy Director Marquez Equalibria shared that the California Civil Rights Department's Community Conflict Resolution Unit (CCRU) offers free, confidential, and impartial services to promote peaceful relations in communities affected by discriminatory practices, hate incidents, or crimes, through mediation, consultations, training, and educational materials. Additionally, the CCRU is developing a student resource guide for college and university students to address heightened tensions on campuses, expected to be published by the beginning of March, providing information on responding to hate and discrimination.

Public Comment

One Commenter discussed a bill that seeks to redefine bias in hate crimes to include discriminatory victim selection, prompted by reluctance in legislative advice and underscored by the murders targeting Asian-owned businesses.

XI. Future Agenda Items

No future agenda items.

XII. Adjournment of the Meeting

Commissioner Damsky moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Levin seconded the motion. Meeting adjourned at 11:59 am.