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Minutes

COMMISSION ON THE STATE OF HATE

Meeting and Community Forum

March 20, 2024

Meeting, 9:00 am PT

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 Shirin Sinnar
Commissioner Erroll Southers

Ex-Officio Members Present
Abby Browning, Governor's Office of Emergency Services

Civil Rights Department Staff Present
Adam Romero, CRD Deputy Director
Alec Watts, Assistant Deputy Director
Monica Chavez, Associate Governmental Program Analyst
Rebecca Goodsell, Research Data Specialist
Shanna Hart, CRD Counsel
Shilpa Ram, CRD Counsel
Marquez Equalibria, Assistant Deputy Director
Gregory Mann, CCRU
Christina Teixeira, CCRU

Others Present
An estimated 30 members of the public participated virtually.

I. Welcome

A. Call to Order

Chair Roybal called the meeting to order at 9:01 a.m.

They welcomed everyone to the third meeting of the year for the California of the State of Hate. They shared the translated closed captioning 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.

Commission skipped to agenda item IV: "Discussion Regarding the Commission's Annual Report."

IV. Discussion Regarding the Commission's Annual Report

Assistant Deputy Director Alec Watts presented a draft of the annual report, focusing on the main strategic goals: Providing a comprehensive account of hate activity in California, developing recommendations to reduce hate crimes, and enhancing resources and support for communities affected by hate.

Commission Discussion

Commissioner Feiler raised concerns about anti-Semitic incidents on University of California campuses, suggesting this be included in the report under state educational responsibilities.

Assistant Deputy Director Alec Watts and Research Specialist Rebecca Goodsell responded that the data was not UC specific but rather focused on schools overall.

Chair Roybal discussed the possibility of gathering more specific data on UC campuses to address these concerns comprehensively.

Assistant Deputy Director Watts noted that it will be looked into.

Vice Chair Salcedo asked about changing Chapter 4 from "reducing hate" to "eliminating hate" as that is the ultimate goal of the Commission.

Commissioner Damsky proposed edits for rephrasing references to the Middle East conflict.

Assistant Deputy Director Alec Watts indicated that it was appropriate to flag issues with the report for consideration.

Commissioner Sinnar suggested the report could be made more accessible through

simplification and the use of visual aids. She expressed a need for briefings on key sections not fully discussed by the Commission.

Commissioner Choi emphasized the importance of subcommittee-specific review of report sections relevant to their contributions, suggested developing executive summaries for broader accessibility, and stressed the need for a robust rollout strategy for the report.

Chair Roybal supported Commissioner Sinnar and Choi's suggestions.

Commissioner Sinnar expressed concerns about recommendations in the report regarding hate incident data collection by police. She noted the report's potentially narrow focus on anti-religious hate in discussing the events of October 7th. She also suggested being consistent with using terms such as "reported" and "alleged."

Commissioner Levin highlighted the need for the Commission to have more autonomy and transparency in its processes. He raised concerns about certain groups being overlooked and stressed the importance of balanced representation in the report. He emphasized the need for local schools to conduct climate surveys to better understand the experiences and tensions students face.

Chair Roybal acknowledged Commissioner Levin's insights and highlighted the importance of improving data visualizations and report processes. They discussed the Bagley-Keene Act in modifying the report's feedback process.

Commissioner Damsky suggested collaborating with community organizations for appropriate language and framing to avoid insensitive narratives in the report.

Assistant Deputy Director Alec Watts proposed a new method where Commissioners would provide written feedback to ensure transparency and compliance with legal requirements.

Commissioner Levin asked for clarification on the feedback process.

Chair Roybal proposed that subcommittees should focus on specific areas relevant to their expertise when reviewing report recommendations.

Assistant Deputy Director Alec Watts agreed and suggested Commissioners could provide feedback on parts of the report relating to their expertise.

Commissioner Feiler suggested adding data about the UCs and adjusting the report's language concerning recent Middle Eastern events to reflect the diverse perspectives of the Commission accurately.

Commissioner Levin stressed the importance of broad community input, especially from vulnerable communities. He advocated for listening and incorporating suggestions to lessen

societal distress.

Vice Chair Salcedo expressed appreciation for the Commissioners and staff.

Commissioner Sinnar echoed Vice Chair Salcedo's sentiments.

Chair Roybal discussed scheduling an additional meeting to review the dense report and incorporate feedback without rushing the process.

Assistant Deputy Director Alec Watts proposed a timeline for commissioners to submit feedback within two weeks.

Chair Roybal confirmed plans to coordinate closely with the Commissioners and staff to ensure timely scheduling and ongoing communication.

Commissioner Levin highlighted the Commission's desire for increased transparency and the need for more comprehensive review opportunities.

In chat from Commission:

Vice Chair Salcedo: I am not sure if the police are peace officers, Maybe we should refer as law enforcement??

Commissioner Damsky: The name of the Commission is the CA Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST).

Vice Chair Salcedo: Thanks Commisioner Damsky. Were you referring to the commission or peace officers or law enforcement in general?

Commissioner Damsky: I was referring to the part of the report which names this Commission, that the Committee on Recommendations for Law Enforcement has been working with.

Vice Chair Salcedo: Thanks Commissioner Damsky!

Commissioner Southers: I have a university emergency and will have to step away momentarily

Public Comment:

The public commentor praised the report’s focus on K-12 education. They discussed concerns about declining civility in public meetings.

Assistant Deputy Director Alec Watts asked Commissioner Sinnar about improving the report’s accessibility and visual appeal.

Commissioner Sinnar suggested organizing brief, targeted briefings to discuss parts of the report that haven't been thoroughly examined by the Commission.

Commissioner Levin shared the following link: https://www.csusb.edu/sites/default/files/2022-08/Report%20To%20The%20Nation8-4-22.pdf

The Commission took a 7-minute break and reconvened at 10:35am.

II. **Approval of the Minutes**

Commissioner Damsky moved to approve the minutes for the January meeting; seconded by Commissioner Feiler.

The minutes were approved:

- Ayes: 6
- Nos: 0
- Abstain: 0

Agenda Item III, "Civil Rights Department Report," was skipped.

III. Civil Rights Department Report

IV. Discussion Regarding the Commission's Annual Report

V. Chair and Subcommittees Updates and Discussion

A. **Chair Russell Roybal**

Updates provided by Chair Roybal:

- Acknowledged Women's History Month and congratulated Vice Chair Salcedo on receiving LA's Pillar of Excellence Award.
- Expressed gratitude to the staff for their work on the substantive report.
- Mentioned upcoming panel with the Racial Equity Commission.

B. **Subcommittee on Data and Research**

Updates provided by Commissioner Sinnar:

- Mentioned ongoing research projects previously discussed in earlier meetings.
- Highlighted two specific projects conducted by UCLA's Institute for the Study of Hate:
    - A literature review by a PhD student on methods to decrease hate and prejudice in schools.
    - An initial-stage project by PhD student examining mental health needs of hate crime

victims and potential interventions.

C. **Subcommittee on Policy Recommendations and Best Practices in Other Jurisdictions**

Updates provided by Commissioner Cuellar:

- The research consultant and CDSS are evaluating programs provided by CBOs to help hate crime victims and are looking to support CDSS's efforts further.
- Follow-upped to subcommittees' interested in engaging with experts and to devise a plan.

Commission Discussion

Commissioner Sinnar shared the Data and Research Subcommittee's discussions with academic experts to identify potential new research projects. They are considering a structured, quarterly engagement with a select group of experts to help guide the Commission's work without overburdening the staff.

Commissioner Levin highlighted the importance of identifying gaps within the Commission or subcommittees, either in expertise or representation. He suggested the potential value of bringing in experts who were instrumental in the Commission's creation and those who could contribute from underrepresented communities.

> Commissioner Cuellar responded appreciatively to the suggestions, noting the Commission's effectiveness in utilizing subject matter experts during community forums.

Chair Roybal mentioned the subcommittee has received requests to take positions on legislation but are not ready to do so. This may change in the future, but for now, the subcommittee advises against it.

D. **Subcommittee on Recommendations for Law Enforcement**

Updates provided by Commissioner Damsky:

- The Subcommittee is collaborating with California's Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) to develop a training video for law enforcement officers. This initiative is in response to the requirements set forth in Assembly Bill 449 concerning the reporting of hate crimes and incidents.

- The video aims to clarify new legislative mandates, highlight the importance of addressing hate crimes seriously, and promote a victim-centered approach.

- The training development process with POST was structured, involving a mandatory three-day workshop. This format restricts further input from the Commission after initial

discussions, raising concerns about the limited opportunity for subsequent contributions once filming starts.

- The development meetings brought together a diverse group of participants, including law enforcement leaders, civil rights advocates, and representatives from community organizations. They collectively worked on the video content, that discussion covered a range of topics such as addressing stereotypes, reporting procedures, realistic portrayals of officers and victims, handling non-violent hate crimes, understanding statistical challenges, law enforcement practices, the role of bias and discrimination, the California vs. Hate initiative, digital transitions, reporting portals, and budgetary and statutory considerations.

- The training video is expected to last between 5 and 15 minutes. It will utilize visuals and scenarios to deliver its message effectively, minimizing the need for lengthy scripts, and will include narration to underscore key points.

- A new discussion point emerged regarding the inclusion of a Commission member as a subject matter expert in the video, which the committee had not previously considered.

- Given the video's unexpected direction, the Subcommittee is contemplating the creation of a video aimed at raising community awareness.

Additional Comments from Commissioner Southers:

- Shared that his absence during the crucial meetings was due to important obligations as president of the LA Police Commission.
- Expressed concern with POST's restrictions regarding Commission.
- Suggested the other video could be aimed at broader community outreach, not just law enforcement.

Chat:

Vice Chair Salcedo: can you share some examples of the videos? Would be great to learn about them as well. Thanks

Assistant Deputy Director Alec Watts: Links to two "Did You Know?" videos by POST:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JCYTuRFTlmE
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=po_p8IOYs3w

Commission Discussion

Commissioner Sinnar sought clarification on specific points related to the content and inclusion of actual victims in the video.

Commissioner Damsky confirmed the goal of is to invite actual victims to participate.

Commissioner Sinnar raised concerns about using actual victims in the police training video due to the potential for secondary trauma. She questioned the need for specifying ethnicities in the depiction of crime scenarios and highlighted the omission of Black victims despite the high incidence of anti-Black hate crimes. Sinnar also expressed concern about a comparison made between stereotypes of Muslims and police officers in the video's content.

Commissioner Damsky responded, explaining that POST prefers real victim accounts to enhance authenticity. She assured that victims would not be required to recount traumatic details extensively. Damsky acknowledged the lack of Black victims in the proposed video as an oversight, promising to relay the concerns back to the POST video team. She also noted that the inclusion of victims with multiple minority identities might address some representational issues.

Chair Roybal clarified that the Commission could not take official action during the meeting as it was not formally noticed, highlighting the session's informational nature.

Commissioner Cuellar asked about representation regarding Tribal Law Enforcement in the development sessions.

Commissioner Damsky confirmed that there had been no discussion about Tribal Law Enforcement nor was there any tribal representation present.

Commissioner Levin discussed the broader impact of racial targeting in law enforcement. He criticized the effectiveness of current video materials. He proposed alternative outreach strategies.

Chair Roybal encouraged the subcommittee to provide feedback and possibly influence policy recommendations regarding how content is created and distributed by state agencies.

Vice Chair Salcedo highlighted the need for transformative approaches in law enforcement culture. She suggested considering mandates or legislation that could enforce necessary changes.

Commissioner Sinnar discussed the lack of community representation on POST's board, particularly from vulnerable groups. She suggested potential disassociation if the video fails to reflect their priorities accurately.

Commissioner Damsky noted that a POST-produced video was crafted from a strict law enforcement perspective, emphasizing legal requirements and consequences for officers. The expectation that such videos be mandatory viewing at roll calls was mentioned.

E. **Subcommittee on Community Forums**

Updates provided by Commissioner Cuellar:

- The upcoming community forum is titled "Understanding Hate During Election Season," featuring speakers Secretary of State Dr. Shirley Weber and Jacqueline De León from the Native American Rights Fund (NARF).
- The next forum is focused on hate experienced by the Native community in Shingle Springs scheduled for May 11th. Future forums are being planned for August or September and November.

F. Subcommittee on Funding
No updates from subcommittee on Funding.

VI. Commission Member Announcements

Vice Chair Salcedo shared exciting news about a new satellite of office of TransLatin@ opening in El Monte, with a grand opening event scheduled for March 30th, featuring a block party and performances.

Commissioner Damsky announced her new role on the Allyship Committee of the Anti-Defamation League of San Diego and Imperial counties, aimed at building bridges between various communities.

Commissioner Sinnar shared her involvement with Stanford's Muslim, Arab, and Palestinian Communities Committee, focusing on addressing community concerns on campus. She mentioned there are preliminary recommendations published by the committee and noted that a final report would be coming soon.

Commissioner Levin congratulated Stop AAPI Hate on their fourth anniversary and highlighted the organization's contributions to the community. He then discussed recent data on hate crimes, noting a significant rise in incidents across several demographics in Los Angeles and other major U.S. cities.

Commissioner Southers invited everyone to the LA Times Festival of Books.

Commissioner Feiler inquired about the accessibility of links shared in the meeting chat, wondering if they could be accessed after the session ended.

Chat:

Commissioner Sinnar shared in Chat:
https://mapcommittee.stanford.edu/sites/g/files/sbiybj30401/files/media/file/map_committee_jan_2024_interim_recs_2-28-24.pdf

Commissioner Damsky: Commissioner Levin, will you please share the report on hacking of water departments with me?

Commissioner Levin: https://www.securityweek.com/white-house-calls-on-states-to-boost-cybersecurity-in-water-sector/

Commissioner Southers shared in Chat: https://events.latimes.com/festivalofbooks/

VII. 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.

VIII. Future Agenda Items

IX. Adjournment of the Meeting

The meeting adjourned at 11:56 am.

Community Forum, 2:00 pm PT

Commissioners Present

Chair Russell Roybal
Vice Chair Bamby Salcedo
Commissioner Regina Cuellar
Commissioner Cece Feiler
Commissioner Brian Levin
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Ex-Officio Members Present

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Marquez Equalibria, Assistant Deputy Director
Gregory Mann, CCRU
Christina Teixeira, CCRU

Others Present

An estimated 108 members of the public participated virtually.

I. Welcome

Commissioner Cuellar welcomed everyone to the Commission on the State of Hate's first community forum of 2024 and reviewed the process for translated closed captioning.

Commissioner Cuellar discussed the goals of the Commission and the forums, shared information about CA vs. Hate, reviewed the process for public comment, and provided a disclaimer.

II. Informational Presentations on Elections and Hate

Commissioner Cuellar introduced the first speaker, California Secretary of State Shirley N. Weber, Ph.D.

A. California Secretary of State Shirley N. Weber, Ph.D.

California Secretary of State Shirley N. Weber, Ph.D. discussed the following information in her presentation:

Recent violent incidents involving police brutality in Mississippi serve as stark reminders of deep-rooted racial hatred in the U.S.

Despite progress like the Voting Rights Act of 1965, challenges in voting rights remain. Secretary Weber is dedicated to enhancing voting accessibility and inclusivity in California through initiatives such as automatic and same-day registration, online registration, and universal vote-by-mail, despite opposition.

Voter ID laws disproportionately affect African-American and Latino voters and illustrate how these laws subtly enforce inequality.

While California is relatively better off in terms of voter disenfranchisement issues such as gerrymandering, there are still ongoing challenges. Secretary of State Weber's office is actively working to enhance voter engagement and education.

Secretary of State Weber's office has implemented measures to protect the voting process's integrity and ensure poll workers' safety, leading to significant reductions in threats and intimidation due to clear legal repercussions.

B. Senior Staff Attorney Jacqueline De León, Native American Rights Fund

Commissioner Cuellar introduced the second speaker, Senior Staff Attorney Jacqueline De León from the Native American Rights Fund (NARF).

Jacqueline De León discussed the following information in her presentation:

Native Americans face significant barriers in accessing their voting rights due to geographical,

infrastructural, and systemic issues. Native communities often are in remote areas and face barriers, such as limited internet access and complex postal and addressing issues, complicating access to voting centers and essential services.

Native Americans encounter fewer registration opportunities and limited early voting options. Instances of overt discrimination, systemic efforts that disenfranchise voters through bureaucratic barriers and economic hardships, also make maintaining consistent registration information difficult.

The political and racial divides between Native communities and their neighboring areas can impact voter access and safety. Issues like Tribal IDs not being accepted as legitimate forms of identification showcase the ongoing discrimination that Native voters face.

In terms of legislation, laws that appear neutral can disproportionately affect Native communities by exploiting existing structural inequities. NARF is actively involved in addressing these issues through litigation, monitoring legislation, and supporting local organizations.

NARF also advocates for increased civic engagement in Native communities. They push for legislative changes, such as the Native American Voting Rights Act, aimed at improving voting accessibility on reservations. NARF encourages states to implement measures like the Native American Voting Task Force and supports voter registration drives at more accessible locations like Indian Health Service facilities. There is a need for continued advocacy and legal action to ensure that Native Americans can fully participate in the democratic process.

Public Comment:

Commissioner Feiler reminded people of the public comment guidance.

The first commenter discussed an upcoming voter education tour in California aimed at empowering youth and exploring the importance of voting through community engagement.

> Secretary Weber praised the initiative and offered her office's support, highlighting the opportunity for collaborative efforts to educate young voters.

The second commenter shared her experience with Vote Forward, emphasizing personal connections through letter writing to inspire voter participation.

> Secretary Weber appreciated the outreach efforts, emphasizing the importance of sharing personal voting experiences and the impact of civic engagement.

The third commenter asked how to find out if her local police department has been trained for Election Day security and what steps to take if they have not.

> Secretary Weber recommended contacting the Attorney General's office or the local police to check their training status and noting that the Secretary’s office sends material to help educate officers about their responsibilities at polling places.

Commission Discussion

Commissioner Levin commended on the issue of disinformation and expressed concerns about false claims of widespread voting fraud.

> Secretary Weber detailed her approach to counter misinformation and explained her interactions with the public and other officials on this issue.

Vice Chair Salcedo discussed issues related to voting accessibility for transgender individuals and asked about initiatives specifically aimed at encouraging the trans community to vote.

> Secretary Weber acknowledged the challenges faced by the trans community and mentioned a new initiative from a group in West Hollywood that supports trans voters.

Commissioner Feiler thanked Secretary Weber for her contributions to ensuring Californians can utilize their voting rights and expressed appreciation for her presence at the meeting.

> Secretary Weber highlighted the importance of the Commission's work in addressing state-wide issues.

Public comment:
One commenter asked about fostering stronger relationships between non-indigenous and indigenous communities in the context of voting and civic participation.

> Jacqueline De Leon responded, explaining the importance of physically visiting Native communities as a sign of genuine interest and respect. She also explained that Native American communities use voting as a tool to protect sovereignty and emphasized the value of allies in communicating these messages.

Another commenter raised concerns about the ease of voting and registration for Native communities in California, especially regarding access to polling places and registration facilities on reservations.

> Jacqueline De Leon responded that there is a need for improvement in California, emphasizing local county registrars' role in facilitating services and suggesting that bringing voter services directly to reservations is crucial. She also noted the potential for Native tribes to utilize Indian Health Services for establishing voter registration agencies.

Commission Discussion

Chair Roybal questioned remaining barriers to voting post-registration, particularly the role of county authorities in facilitating or obstructing voting access.

> Jacqueline De Leon responded by discussing the process of engaging county registrars and incorporating them into discussions to ensure they comply with voter registration laws and facilitate the voting process.

Commissioner Cuellar shared successes in her community, mentioning the lowering of barriers and local support for Native voting initiatives.

Commissioner Levin asked about the broader context of hate crimes and intimidation affecting Native Americans' civic engagement.

Jacqueline De Leon acknowledged the increase in hate crimes and specific instances of discrimination and intimidation impacting Native Americans, including restrictions and hostility in border towns and deliberate undermining of Native candidates.

Chair Roybal discussed the persistent challenges in political participation and the impacts of hate, despite California's progressive stance.

Jacqueline De Leon responded that the low voter turnout among Native Americans indicates significant room for improvement.

III. Public Comment on Items Not on the Agenda

IV. Adjournment

Commissioners Cuellar and Feiler thanked everyone and adjourned the forum at 3:49 pm.