



Civil Rights Department Commission on the State of Hate

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Minutes

Commission on the State of Hate February 26, 2025, 9:00 am

Commissioners Present

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

Ex Officio Members Present

Abby Browning, Ex officio member of the Commission
Damon Brown, Ex officio member of the Commission

Civil Rights Department (CRD) Staff Present

Kevin Kish, Director of the California Civil Rights Department
Adam Romero, Executive Deputy Director
Rishi Khalsa, Deputy Director of Communications
Marquez Equalibria, Assistant Deputy Director of the Community Conflict Resolution
Alec Watts, Assistant Deputy Director of the Research & Strategic Initiatives
Rebecca Goodsell, Research Data Specialist
David Kalkstein, Research Data Specialist
Kevin Thomas, Research Data Specialist
Monica Chavez, Associate Governmental Program Analyst
Shilpa Ram, Assistant General Counsel
Kendra Tanacea, Attorney Mediator
Shanna Heart, Assurance & Reporting Appeals Unit Consultant

RUSSELL ROYBAL
CHAIR

BAMBY SALCEDO
VICE CHAIR

CYNTHIA CHOI
COMMISSIONER

REGINA CUELLAR
COMMISSIONER

ANDREA BETH DAMSKY
COMMISSIONER

CECE FEILER
COMMISSIONER

BRIAN LEVIN
COMMISSIONER

ERROLL SOUTHERS
COMMISSIONER

Others Present

An estimated 14 members of the public attended virtually.

I. Welcome

A. Call to Order

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

They welcomed everyone to the California Commission on the State of Hate's first meeting of the year. They shared that translated closed captioning is available for this meeting.

B. Establishment of a Quorum

Assistant Deputy Director Alec Watts conducted the roll call.

C. Review of the Agenda

Chair Roybal reviewed the agenda and public comment process. They noted that Agenda Item V will be removed, Agenda Item VIII will go after Agenda Item III, and Agenda Item IV will go after Agenda Item VIII.

Link Sent in the Chat:

https://calcivilrights.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/sites/32/2025/02/CSH-Meeting_2.26.2025_NoticeAgenda.pdf

II. Discussion and Election of Chair

Chair Roybal announced that they will not be running for re-election. They reviewed the responsibilities of the Chair, the nomination procedure, and the election procedure.

Commissioner Levin and Vice Chair Salcedo expressed their interest in running for Commission Chair.

Vice Chair Salcedo was nominated by Commissioner Cuellar. Commissioner Levin was nominated by Commissioner Damsky.

Commission Discussion

Commissioner Levin and Vice Chair Salcedo each provided a three-minute statement. Chair Roybal reviewed the election procedure before moving to a vote.

Commission Action

Assistant Deputy Director Alec Watts conducted a roll call vote.

The Commission elected Commissioner Levin to serve as Commission Chair (5-3)

Commissioner Levin expressed his gratitude for being elected Chair of the Commission.

III. Discussion and Election of Vice Chair

Chair Roybal reviewed the nomination and election process for the Vice Chair position.

Commissioner Damsky raised her hand to indicate her willingness to run for the Vice Chair position.

Commissioner Levin nominated Commissioner Damsky for Vice Chair.

Commission Discussion

Commissioner Damsky provided a brief statement.

Commission Action

The Commission elected Commissioner Damsky to serve as Commission Vice Chair (8-0).

Commissioner Damsky expressed her gratitude for being elected Vice Chair of the Commission.

Commission Discussion

Commissioners expressed their gratitude for Chair Roybal's work.

Chair Roybal thanked the Commissioners for the opportunity to serve as Chair.

VIII. Chair and Subcommittees Updates and Discussion

Note: This agenda item was moved to after Agenda Item III.

A. Chair Russell Roybal

Updates provided by Chair Roybal:

- After the Chair updates, Vice Chair Salcedo will serve as Chair for the remainder of the meeting, as Chair Roybal will depart early.

RUSSELL ROYBAL
CHAIR

BAMBY SALCEDO
VICE CHAIR

CYNTHIA CHOI
COMMISSIONER

REGINA CUELLAR
COMMISSIONER

ANDREA BETH DAMSKY
COMMISSIONER

CECE FEILER
COMMISSIONER

BRIAN LEVIN
COMMISSIONER

ERROLL SOUTHERS
COMMISSIONER

- The Commission reflects on the important events that have taken place since the December meeting, including Ed Roberts Day, Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, and Black History Month.
- The Commission's 2023-2024 Report has now been published.
- Review of the policy recommendations and guiding principles published in the Commission report.

Link Sent in the Chat:

<https://calcivilrights.ca.gov/commission-on-the-state-of-hate/commission-reports/#body>

Commission Discussion:

Chair Roybal announced they were leaving the meeting and turned the running of the meeting over to Vice Chair Salcedo.

B. Subcommittee on Recommendations for Law Enforcement

There was no update by the Subcommittee on Recommendations for Law Enforcement.

C. Subcommittee on Data and Research

Updates provided by Commissioner Levin:

- Mentioned the research and policy convening held by the Initiative to Study Hate at UCLA to discuss prevention related to hate online and in K-12 schools.
- There are rising instances of hate on online platforms.
- Shared preliminary data on hate in 2023 from the FBI and data from 2023-24 for various cities across the country.

D. Subcommittee on Policy Recommendations and Best Practices in Other Jurisdictions

There was no update by the Subcommittee on Policy Recommendations and Best Practices.

E. Subcommittee on Community Forums

Update provided by Commissioner Cuellar:

- The potential community forum topics for the year include anti-immigrant hate, dialog across differences, online hate, schools and disabilities, and rural communities.

- One of these topics may instead be incorporated as a presentation in a future Commission meeting.

Commission Discussion

Commissioner Levin offered to connect the subcommittee with potential people to present at one of the future community forums.

F. Subcommittee on Funding

There was no update from the subcommittee on funding.

Public Comment

One public commenter expressed thoughts on the Commission's Annual Report, including advocating for additional recommendations related to the disability community.

VI. Informational Presentation: Overview and Accomplishments of the Community Conflict Resolution Unit

Assistant Deputy Director Marquez Equalibria provided an overview of the Community Conflict Resolution Unit (CCRU):

- CCRU facilitates conflict resolution, community dialogues, and mediation efforts.
- CCRU has collaborated with many groups, including the Santa Barbara NAACP, the California Truth and Healing Council. They have also collaborated with community members to improve relations between students.
- CCRU has conducted over 100 community engagement sessions, dozens of consultations, and 10 trainings, reaching nearly 4,000 people since its inception.
- Discussed CCRU's ongoing efforts, such as mediating a policy for youth access to public parks, supporting anti-hate coalitions, LGBTQ+ outreach, and conducting de-escalation training in response to hate speech concerns.

Commission Discussion

Commissioner Choi asked about how people find out about their resources.

Assistant Deputy Director Equilibria responded that the outreach is done with organizations, and those groups refer people to CCRU.

Ex Officio Brown asked about outreach to school leadership.

IX. Commission Member Announcements

Commissioner Levin thanked everyone for electing him as the next Commission Chair and discussed his commitment to the Commission's mission.

Commissioner Southers shared that Matthew Barragan was elected the new Inspector General for the Los Angeles Police Department's Office of Inspector General.

Vice Chair Salcedo invited everyone to the Walk for Humanity on August 24, 2025, in Los Angeles.

Action by the Commission for Agenda Item IV

Commissioner Cuellar moved to approve the subcommittee modifications discussed in Agenda Item IV; Commissioner Levin seconded.

Ayes: 6 (Vice Chair Salcedo, Commissioner Choi, Commissioner Cuellar, Commissioner Feiler, Commissioner Levin, Commissioner Southers)

Nays: 0

Commission Discussion

Vice Chair Salcedo congratulated Commissioners Levin and Damsky for their new positions on the Commission.

Commissioners Choi and Levin thanked Vice Chair Salcedo for her leadership and work as Vice Chair of the Commission.

X. Future Agenda Items

No future agenda items were discussed.

XI. Public Comment on Items Not on the Agenda

A public commenter submitted a public comment about a matter related to their community of faith via email, which was read out loud, and the commenter provided context on Zoom.

Another commenter requested that the Commission add an agenda item related to a recommendation that law enforcement agencies adopt a senior disability coordinator.

XII. Adjournment of the Meeting

Commissioner Cuellar motioned to adjourn the meeting; Commissioner Feiler seconded.

The meeting adjourned at 11:19 am.