Civil Rights Department

Commission on the State of Hate

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Minutes

Commission on the State of Hate
meeting of the following subcommittees:

Subcommittee on Community Forums
Subcommittee on Patterns, Trends, and Prevention

October 22, 2025, 9:00 am PT

Commissioners Present

Chair Brian Levin
Commissioner Cynthia Choi
Commissioner Regina Cuellar
Commissioner Russell Roybal
Commissioner Bamby Salcedo
Commissioner Erroll Southers

Ex Officio Members Present

Monisha Avery, Ex officio member of the Commission

Civil Rights Department (CRD) Staff Present

Julia Parish, Deputy Director, Legislation, Regulation, and Policy Division
Alec Watts, Assistant Deputy Director
Rebecca Goodsell, Research Data Specialist
Kevin Thomas, Research Data Specialist
Shilpa Ram, Assistant General Counsel
Kendra Tanacea, Attorney Mediator

Others Present

An estimated 11 members of the public attended virtually.

I. **Welcome**

Chair Levin welcomed everyone to the meeting and reviewed the processes for closed captioning. He recognized several observances, including Diwali, Indigenous Peoples Day, and Italian-American Heritage Month, followed by a moment of remembrance for the victims of the Tree of Life Synagogue attack and murder of Wadea al-Fayoume. Chair Levin discussed the meeting format as

being a collaboration between the two subcommittees. Alec Watts conducted the roll call, and Chair Levin reviewed the meeting agenda and process for public comment.

Links Shared in the Chat:
https://calcivilrights.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/sites/32/2025/10/CSH_Meeting_10.22.2025_NoticeAgenda.pdf

CSH@calcivilrights.ca.gov

II. Informational Presentation: "Data Update"

Chair Levin shared recent data released by the California Health Information Survey on Californians' experiences with hate in 2024. Highlights from this data release can be found at the following link: https://healthpolicy.ucla.edu/sites/default/files/2025-10/hate-acts-ca-infographic-2025.pdf

Chair Levin shared information on topics including:

- Federal legislation related to the Commission: H.R. 2588 (Improving Reporting to Prevent Hate Act) and H.R. 5546 (Combating Hate Across Campus Act)
- A study from the American Psychological Association that examines the neurophysiological mechanisms underlying why individuals on the far left and right sides of the political spectrum may view the world from similar vantage points
- A chat platform, Sway, which is designed to enable students who have differing perspectives to have more constructive discussions
- Discussion of the importance of using data to frame public policy and responses to political actions
- Discussion of the continuing polarization and political violence in the U.S.
- Data on hate crimes over time, by month and year, for Californians

Public Comment

No public comment on this agenda item.

III. Discussion of Purpose and Goals of the Meeting

Commissioner Choi shared that the aim of collaboration meeting is to have both data and community voices guide the Commission's recommendations. The outcome of this meeting will help to facilitate more of discussions in the future.

Key Priorities:

- Data-Driven & Community-Centered: Identify concrete ways for the subcommittees to work together.
- Responsive to Current Conditions: Stay nimble and relevant in a rapidly changing environment.

- Center Impacted Voices: Ensure the voices of those most impacted shape the Commission's direction and priorities.

Public Comment

No public comment on this agenda item.

IV. Summary of Previous Activities of Subcommittees

Alec Watts shared summaries of the activities of the Subcommittee on Community Forums and the Subcommittee on Patterns, Trends, and Prevention since the Commission's inception. These included learnings from all the community forums hosted by the Commission and summaries of the key research projects sponsored by the Commission and conducted by staff.

Research Projects:

- Patterns and Trends: (e.g., prevalence of hate, targeted groups, impacts on public officials).
- Prevention and Reduction: (e.g., K-12 schools, online hate response, public messaging).
- Resources, Support, and Response: (e.g., service gaps, mental health impacts, bystander training, offender motivations, rehabilitation, and recidivism).
- Special Topics: (e.g., law enforcement data transparency, mass casualty response, LGBTQ+ hate).

Community Forums:

- The Commission has held 10 forums since 2022, with 2 more planned for the year.
- Forums have been held in both urban (e.g., LA, San Diego) and rural (e.g., Shingle Springs, Fresno) areas.
- Topics have included mental health impacts, threats to public officials, hate in schools, and hate impacting specific groups (Indigenous communities, people with disabilities, immigrant communities).

Commissioner Discussion

Commissioner Salcedo expressed appreciation for the opportunity to collaborate.

Commissioner Roybal apologized for joining late and expressed his appreciation for all of the work the Commission.

Public Comment

A member of the public inquired about the details of the upcoming community forum in Redding.

V. Discussion between the Subcommittee on Community Forums and the Subcommittee on Patterns, Trends, and Prevention

Commissioner Choi shared the goals of this collaboration meeting again and, along with

Commissioner Cuellar, led the discussion. Below are some takeaways from the discussion:

- Commissioners discussed strengthening the design and impact of upcoming community forums, with a shared goal of integrating survivor voices, community experiences, and research-driven policy recommendations. Commissioners emphasized that hearing directly from those affected by hate incidents adds critical context to data findings and helps ground the Commission's work in lived realities. Commissioners also acknowledged the need to approach survivor engagement with sensitivity, suggesting partnerships with community-based organizations, the use of qualitative data from the California Health Interview Survey, and the use of anonymized narratives from CA vs Hate.
- Commissioners proposed increasing participation from policymakers and legislators in future forums so they can directly hear from impacted communities. They also highlighted the need to address the experiences of undocumented residents, who may be less likely to report hate crimes. Chair Levin also encouraged the inclusion of cultural and artistic presentations to celebrate California's diversity as a way to humanize communities.
- Commissioner Choi suggested that each forum should connect data and testimony to concrete recommendations and policy action, while also suggesting public dissemination of the Commission's existing recommendations to raise awareness and invite feedback.
- Chair Levin suggested periodically reviewing external polling data on vulnerable communities to complement existing research.

Public Comment

No public comment on this agenda item.

VI. Public Comment on Items Not on the Agenda

No public comment on this agenda item.

VII. Adjournment of the Meeting

The meeting adjourned at 10:41 am.