



September 5, 2019

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
 Governor, State of California
 1303 10th Street, Suite 1173
 Sacramento, CA 95814

Subject: Domestic terrorism and hate crimes

Dear Governor Newsom:

We are writing on behalf of 17 major civil rights organizations in California that variously represent communities most often targeted for hate crimes and domestic terrorism and that collectively have a vast store of expertise and experience with these problems. We want to thank you for your leadership in this area, including for the funds in the 2019-20 budget to create a Department of Justice hate crimes unit and for your new Creating Safer Communities Task Force to address the state's and the nation's burgeoning crisis.

Thanks to the leadership of some past Legislatures, Governors and Attorneys General, California has some of the best statutes in the nation, both civil and criminal, to prevent and respond to hate crimes and related violence.

Notwithstanding these accomplishments, however, California for five years has experienced an increasing amount of hate crime, is a center for white supremacists and multi-mission criminal extremists intent on recruiting others to join their ranks, and is the home base of major Internet platforms that these extremists use to recruit nationwide and worldwide. While the number of hate crimes in the official California Department of Justice statistics was down slightly in 2018, the Center for the Study of Hate and Extremism found that the statistics omitted some hate crimes, including three homicides, because law enforcement agencies reported these crimes to DOJ when they were committed and only later determined they were hate crimes. And last year, the State Auditor bluntly concluded that “law enforcement has not adequately identified, reported or responded to hate crimes.”

Thus, your announcement that you are creating the Creating Safer Communities Task Force to address these issues could not be more timely.

To help meet these challenges, we make these requests of you:

1. Several of our organizations were already invited to participate in the Task Force’s inaugural meeting. Other leaders of our organizations have applied or will apply to join. As a coalition we are endorsing no particular applicants, but we ask that, when screening applicants, you consider these leaders carefully along with other experts.
2. The allocation of almost \$800,000 for the new Department of Justice hate crimes unit pursuant to the 2018 audit recommendations shows that California is serious about not just talk but action. We believe now is the time to announce it publicly.
3. AB 300 (Chu) and AB 1052 (Chu) would assure better law enforcement training, reporting and prosecution of hate crimes. We are disappointed that your Department of Finance has opposed these critically important bills, and we note that, with this opposition, the Senate Appropriations Committee held them on August 30. We ask that you have DOF withdraw its opposition and that you support them now.
4. The Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) has released its strong, new hate crimes model law enforcement agency policy pursuant to AB 1985 (Ting) of 2018. We ask you to urge all local law enforcement agencies to adopt the POST model. We also ask you to order all state law enforcement agencies to adopt it, as Penal Code Section 13519.6(c) requires. In light of the facts that hate crime surges starting in 2015 have followed inflammatory election campaign rhetoric and have clustered around elections, and that the 2020 campaign is already rhetorically heated with signs of continuing to escalate and our Super Tuesday primary is less than six months away, we hope you will ask the law enforcement agencies to act promptly.

5. Knowing that public statements by responsible leaders make a difference in social attitudes and some individuals' actions, just as public statements by irresponsible leaders do, we ask that you hold a press conference, inviting Attorney General Becerra, the Police Chiefs and Sheriffs Associations, major legislators, and the civil rights groups. We believe such a press conference would be an ideal platform to announce actions including those we are asking of you above.

We are always available to consult with you or your staff on these critical matters. We are including our email addresses below so that you can reply to all of us directly.

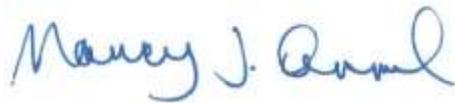
Sincerely,



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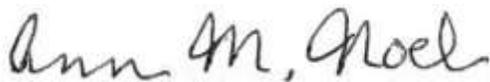
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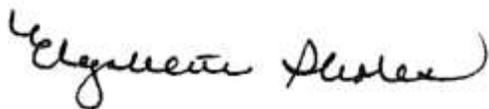
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The Honorable Phil Ting