

Asian Americans and 100 Supporting Organizations Celebrate Enactment of Historic Update to California's Hate Crimes Law

A coalition of over 100 sponsoring and supporting organizations gathers today in San Francisco to celebrate the enactment of the Freedom from Hate Crimes Act

SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA, UNITED STATES, October 19, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Today a California statewide coalition of over 100 sponsoring and supporting organizations gathers in San Francisco's Chinatown to celebrate the enactment of AB 449, the Freedom from Hate Crimes Act. AB 449 was signed by Governor Newsom last week after passing the California Legislature unanimously.



Oct. 19, 2023 Press Conference with Phil Ting, Charles Jung, and Anti-Hate Coalition to Celebrate Enactment of AB 449

The new law requires every law enforcement officer in the state – from CHP patrol officers to local park rangers – to know and follow a detailed policy guiding them to identify, report and respond to hate crimes. Every law enforcement agency is required to adopt the policy by July 1, 2024. To ensure accountability, every agency must submit its policy to the state Department of Justice to be checked for compliance with the strict legal requirements.

During the pandemic, the Center for the Study of Hate and Extremism reported that [anti-Asian hate crimes increased 189% during the first quarter of 2021](#). While after the pandemic, some reports show a decrease in reported anti-Asian hate crimes, the FBI reported that, overall, racial, anti-Jewish, and anti-LGBTQ hate crimes rose in 2022.

“Hate crimes against Asian Americans are crimes against all Americans, and all Americans deserve freedom from hate. During the pandemic, the Asian American community experienced an epidemic of hate and violence. That violence continues to this day for many racial and religious minorities. This bill is one step in our demand for equality and civil rights,” said [Charles H. Jung](#), Executive Director of the bill's sponsor, the [California Asian Pacific American Bar](#)

Association.



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The bill adopts the major recommendations of the State Auditor’s report, “Hate Crimes In California: Law Enforcement Has Not Adequately Identified, Reported, or Responded to Hate Crimes.”

“While we’ve seen a decrease in hate attacks against the AAPI community, we know the work isn’t done and AAPIs and many other communities still face hate. We must all be on the same page and standardize our policies to provide equal treatment when these unfortunate incidents

occur,” said Assemblymember Phil Ting (D-San Francisco), who wrote the bill. “I thank Governor Newsom for signing this bill, and all the stakeholders who have supported these efforts for years. We can now ensure there is consistent enforcement of hate crime laws and accurate data collection will help us come up with solutions.”

“Anti-disability crimes are the invisible hate crimes. AB 449 will ensure that every law enforcement officer in California pays attention to indicators of these terrible crimes,” said Greg deGiere, Civil Rights Advocate at sponsoring organization, The Arc of California.

“In a state as diverse as California, it is essential that every law enforcement agency develop hate crimes policies and protocols to effectively preserve our state’s pluralistic ethos. The Hindu American community applauds Assemblymember Ting for his leadership on AB 449 to ensure Californians from all walks of life feel safe and secure. The Hindu American Foundation is proud to have sponsored this important bill that finally requires every law enforcement agency to adopt and follow a rigorous policy guiding officers in preventing and responding to these crimes, while also highlighting Hindu articles and symbols to assist law enforcement in identifying hate crimes against California Hindus,” said Samir Kalra, Esq., Managing Director of sponsoring organization, the Hindu American Foundation.

“AB 449 takes a monumental step to enhance protections for California’s most vulnerable communities, especially for seniors and people with disabilities, from hate crimes. CARA applauds Assemblymember Ting for his unwavering commitment to pursue these reforms and we thank the Legislature and the Governor for supporting this historic initiative,” said Keith Umemoto, Vice President of sponsoring organization, the California Alliance for Retired Americans (CARA)

“The Sikh Coalition was proud to sponsor AB 449, which will push law enforcement agencies to respond systematically and fully to hate and violence experienced by many communities, including the Sikh community. The latest FBI data reveals that religiously motivated hate crime victimizations—both in general and for Sikh Americans specifically—were at their highest since

2001, yet reporting of hate crime data by law enforcement agencies continues to decline across the nation. More must be done, and AB 449 is a step in the right direction to ensuring that California leads the way in properly handling hate crime cases and seeking justice for those who need it," said Harman Singh, Education and Policy Director, of sponsoring organization, the Sikh Coalition.

A press conference and celebration will be held today, Thursday, October 19, 2023 at 11:30 am, in San Francisco's Chinatown, at the Chinese Historical Society of America Museum, 965 Clay St, San Francisco, CA 94108.

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What does AB 449 (Ting) Do?

The bill requires every law enforcement officer in California – from CHP officers to county park rangers – to know and follow a detailed policy guiding officers to recognize, report and respond to hate crimes. Every law enforcement agency is required to adopt the policy by July 1, 2024.

To ensure accountability, each law enforcement agency will be required to submit its hate crime policy to the Department of Justice to be checked for legal compliance and inclusion of the required elements, including:

A message from the law enforcement agency's chief executive officer (chief, sheriff or director) to the agency's officers and staff concerning the importance of hate crime laws and the agency's commitment to enforcement.

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