



Legislation Text

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Res. No. 1259

Resolution calling upon the President to establish an anti-Semitism task force.

By Council Members Powers, Kallos and Brannan

Whereas, Over the past few years, hate crimes across the country have been increasing; and

Whereas, In 2017, the number of hate crimes reordered by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) had risen by 17 percent from 2016, and was the third consecutive year in which hate crimes increased; and

Whereas, The numbers may actually be much higher as many victims do not report to the authorities, and not all law enforcement departments report to the FBI; and

Whereas, This upward trend has also been witnessed in New York City; and

Whereas, There were 325 hate crime complaints in the City in 2017 and 353 complaints in 2018; and

Whereas, Although there are only data available for three quarters of 2019, the number of complaints recorded for that part of the year was already at 309; and

Whereas, Anti-Semitism has been a particular motivator in many of the bias and hate crimes recorded at both the federal and local level; and

Whereas, In 2017, for example, anti-Semitic hate crimes recorded by FBI data hit a seven year high; and

Whereas, Similarly, in the country's biggest cities, New York, Los Angeles and Chicago, Jewish people were the most frequent targets of hate crimes in 2019, according to analysis of data by the Center for the Study of Hate and Extremism (CSHE); and

Whereas, According to the CSHE report, there were 185 anti-Semitic hate crimes during 2018 in New

York City and 229 in 2019; and

Whereas, The rise in anti-Semitic hate crimes is occurring at the same time as communities are experiencing a drop in general crime; and

Whereas, Last year in New York City, for instance, overall crime was at a record low in 2019, according to NYPD data, but anti-Semitic hate crimes increased by 26 percent; and

Whereas, Despite a general fall in violent crimes across the country, hate crimes have also become more violent; and

Whereas, Two recent examples exemplify the brutality and viciousness of anti-Semitic attackers; and

Whereas, On December 28, 2019, the seventh night of Hanukkah, five people were stabbed by an intruder who broke into the home of a Hasidic rabbi in Monsey, New York, and began attacking people; and

Whereas, This act of terrorism came just weeks after four people were shot and killed by two attackers, fueled by anti-Semitism, who targeted a kosher supermarket in New Jersey; and

Whereas, Everyone has the right to practice their religion without threat of interference or violence; and

Whereas, With the revival of anti-Semitism, white supremacist hate and neo-Nazism, however, this freedom is under serious threat; and

Whereas, White supremacist and neo-Nazi hate groups have been targeting New York City for recruiting purposes, leaving pamphlets, posters, and hanging banners in various neighborhoods; and

Whereas, This has made people feel threatened and unsafe in their community;

Whereas, In the past, when specific communities have been made the target of hate and violence, the federal government has convened task forces to investigate; and

Whereas, For example, after numerous African-American churches were targeted in arson attacks between 1995 and 1996, then-President Bill Clinton established the National Church Arson Task Force; and

Whereas, This task force helped coordinate the local government and law enforcement responses to the arson attacks and prevention measures, which assisted communities rebuild their sense of safety; and

Whereas, New York City has the largest population of Jewish people in the United States; and

Whereas, Everyone has the right to feel safe while practicing their faith and going about their life; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls on the President to establish an anti-Semitism task force.

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LMS