

TALKING POINTS

Improving Reporting to Prevent Hate Act

National Council of Jewish Women's (NCJW) Message

National Council of Jewish Women (NCJW) works to guarantee that all individuals can live free from violence and persecution. The FBI's 2022 Hate Crimes Statistics, the most recent data available, showed the highest level of hate crimes ever reported in the United States, despite receiving data from the smallest number of police departments in over a decade.¹

At NCJW, we feel the pain of rising hate, as both Jews who face the threat of antisemitism every day, and as Jewish advocates who believe that hate in any form threatens our communities and undermines our values. Guided by the Jewish value *Kavod Ha Bri'ot* — respect and dignity for all human beings — we know that preventing hate crimes is integral to our mission of creating a world where every person is free to live with dignity and in safety.

In order to achieve this goal, we need accurate data. We cannot fight a problem that we cannot see. By requiring local law enforcement agencies to track and report hate crimes, we can learn how to better mobilize community resources to address rising hate. The bipartisan **Improving Reporting to Prevent Hate Act (H.R. 7648)**, introduced by Representatives Don Beyer (D-VA) and Don Bacon (R-NE), would require large cities to credibly report hate crime data, or carry out significant hate crime awareness campaigns, in order to receive certain federal funding. ***Congress must pass the Improving Reporting to Prevent Hate Act in order to provide governments and communities with the tools to fight rising levels of hate, bias, and violence nationwide.***

¹Michael Lieberman, "New Legislation an Opportunity to Improve Hate Crime Data, Combat Violence," The Southern Poverty Law Center, last modified April 24, 2024, <https://www.splcenter.org/hopewatch/2024/04/24/new-legislation-opportunity-hate-crime-data>.

- **We have a responsibility to ensure every one of our communities are safe from this violence, but every day, more and more individuals and families are suffering in the face of hate.** Jewish, Black, Muslim, AAPI, Latinx, and LGBTQ+ communities continue to be targeted by hate. In 2022, the most recent year of data, the FBI documented the highest number of reported hate crime incidents on record. This included 1,122 anti-Jewish hate crimes, over half of reported religious-based hate crimes.
- **Federal data on hate crimes is incomplete due to underreporting.** Hate crimes are rising every year, affecting communities across the country. Although the FBI collects data on hate crimes every year to better understand and help mitigate this trend, thousands of agencies nationwide continue to fail to report hate crimes to the FBI. This means that we have little to no information about levels of hate in huge swaths of the country. Even among participating agencies, almost 80% reported zero hate crimes in 2022, even in large cities.² Without accurate and complete data, governments and communities cannot properly obtain and mobilize the resources needed to mitigate hate crimes.
- **Better hate crime data can help improve resources for hate crime prevention and victim support.** Improved data would equip legislators, law enforcement officials, community advocates and non-profits with the information necessary to both assess the efficacy of existing prevention efforts, and devise new strategies to address hate crimes. These strategies could include educational programming, law enforcement training, and increased engagement with victim advocates, schools, and civic leaders.
- **The Improving Reporting to Prevent Hate Act would make hate crime data more accurate and consistent.** The bill incentivizes law enforcement agencies to report hate crimes to the FBI. It requires agencies serving cities of over 100,000 people to credibly report hate crimes, or have substantial hate crime public education and awareness initiatives, in order to be eligible for funding under the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968.³
- **Passing the Improving Reporting to Prevent Hate Act** would enable more effective measurement of hate crimes, which would facilitate improved local, state, and national efforts to counter the concerning rise of hate crimes across the United States.

²Lieberman, "New Legislation," The Southern Poverty Law Center.

³Improving Reporting to Prevent Hate Act of 2024, H.R. 7648, 118th Cong. (as introduced, Mar. 13, 2024). <https://www.congress.gov/bill/118th-congress/house-bill/7648>.