
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 495 Session of
2017

INTRODUCED BY SCHLOSSBERG, MURT, BOYLE, CALTAGIRONE, CHARLTON,
CRUZ, DAVIS, DEAN, DEASY, DeLUCA, DONATUCCI, DRISCOLL,
FRANKEL, HARKINS, J. HARRIS, HILL-EVANS, KINSEY, McCLINTON,
McNEILL, MENTZER, MILLARD, NEILSON, O'BRIEN, PASHINSKI,
READSHAW, ROEBUCK, ROZZI, SAYLOR, SCHWEYER, SOLOMON, THOMAS,
VAZQUEZ, WATSON AND BIZZARRO, SEPTEMBER 21, 2017

INTRODUCED AS NONCONTROVERSIAL RESOLUTION UNDER RULE 35,
SEPTEMBER 21, 2017

A RESOLUTION

1 Condemning hate crime and any other form of racism, religious or
2 ethnic bias, discrimination, incitement to violence or animus
3 targeting a minority in this Commonwealth and beyond.

4 WHEREAS, Over the past several years, violent crimes, threats
5 of violence and other incidents of hate-motivated targeting of
6 religious, racial and ethnic minorities have increased across
7 the United States; and

8 WHEREAS, According to the Federal Bureau of Investigation, in
9 2015, hate crimes targeting Muslims in the United States
10 increased by 67%, reaching a level of violence targeting Muslim
11 Americans that the United States had not experienced since the
12 aftermath of the September 11, 2001, attacks; and

13 WHEREAS, Muslims serve their communities and country as
14 contributing members of society who care deeply about this
15 nation and are troubled by the rise in hateful rhetoric against
16 the Islamic faith; and

1 WHEREAS, Incidents of anti-Islamic and anti-Semitic speech
2 and behavior have been increasing across this Commonwealth and
3 the United States; and

4 WHEREAS, According to the Anti-Defamation League's annual
5 Audit of Anti-Semitic Incidents, 67 reported incidents of anti-
6 Semitic behavior targeting Jews and Jewish institutions occurred
7 in Pennsylvania in 2016; and

8 WHEREAS, Assaults targeting Jews have tripled nationally
9 since 2012, and online harassment and hate speech directed at
10 Jewish journalists and individuals through social media has
11 increased; and

12 WHEREAS, According to the Anti-Defamation League, during the
13 2016-2017 school year, institutions of higher education also
14 experienced an increase in white supremacist activity on college
15 campuses across the United States; and

16 WHEREAS, According to the Federal Bureau of Investigation,
17 among single-bias hate crime incidents in 2015 across the United
18 States, 59.2% of victims were targeted due to racial, ethnic or
19 ancestry bias, and among those victims, 52.2% were victims of
20 crimes motivated by their offenders' anti-Black or anti-African-
21 American bias; and

22 WHEREAS, In 2017, there have been more than 100 reported bomb
23 threats against Jewish community centers, Jewish day schools and
24 other Jewish organizations and institutions in more than 38
25 states; and

26 WHEREAS, In 2017, Islamic centers and mosques in Texas,
27 Washington and Florida have been burned, a mosque in Minnesota
28 has been bombed and Jewish cemeteries in Missouri and
29 Pennsylvania have been desecrated; and

30 WHEREAS, In 2017, incidents of harassment and hate-based

1 violence against individuals who are perceived to be Arab or
2 Muslim, including members of South Asian communities in the
3 United States, and Hindu and Sikh Americans have been the target
4 of hate-based violence against religious minorities; and

5 WHEREAS, On February 28, 2017, before a joint session of the
6 Congress of the United States, the President of the United
7 States denounced threats targeting Jewish community centers and
8 the vandalism of Jewish cemeteries by stating that "we are a
9 country that stands united in condemning hate and evil in all of
10 its very ugly forms"; and

11 WHEREAS, Pennsylvania has a proud history of standing as a
12 beacon and a refuge for people of all religions seeking freedom
13 from persecution, beginning with the founding of this
14 Commonwealth by William Penn in 1681 through the present day;
15 therefore be it

16 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives condemn all hate
17 crimes and any other form of racism, religious or ethnic bias,
18 discrimination, incitement to violence or animus targeting a
19 minority in this Commonwealth and beyond; and be it further

20 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives urge all law
21 enforcement officials to expeditiously investigate all credible
22 reports of hate crimes and incidents and threats against
23 minorities in this Commonwealth and hold perpetrators
24 accountable for these hate crimes, incidents or threats; and be
25 it further

26 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives encourage the
27 Attorney General of the Commonwealth, in consultation with other
28 law enforcement officials, to develop effective strategies and
29 efforts to detect and deter hate crimes in order to protect
30 minority communities, to emphasize the importance of law

1 enforcement agencies' collection and reporting of data on hate
2 crimes pursuant to Federal law and to encourage agencies to
3 improve the reporting of hate crimes; and be it further

4 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives affirm that all
5 faiths must be equally protected to enjoy real and true
6 religious freedom, condemn hate and evil in all forms and reject
7 hate-motivated crime as an attack on the fabric of the society
8 of this Commonwealth and our shared ideals of pluralism and
9 respect.