



**LEGISLATION &  
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July 14, 2021

Honorable Anthony Portantino  
Chair, Appropriations Committee  
California State Senate  
State Capitol, Room 5050  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: AB 57 (GABRIEL) as amended May 24, 2021 – SUPPORT**

Dear Senator Portantino:

Disability Rights California (DRC), a non-profit advocacy organization that advances and protects the rights of Californians with disabilities, **supports AB 57**. This bill is scheduled for hearing before Senate Appropriations Committee on July 15, 2021.

Hate crimes have been on the rise throughout the country and in California in recent years.<sup>1</sup> Many hate crimes go unreported, due in part to the lack of training and understanding of hate crimes by peace officers. Specifically, anti-Asian hate crimes rose nearly 150% in major U.S. cities this past year, during the COVID-19 pandemic, including a tragic killing of Asian Americans in Atlanta, Georgia earlier this week.<sup>2</sup>

Persons with disabilities are consistently targeted as victims of hate crimes.<sup>3</sup> The numbers are especially high when the crime is against a person with a disability, who is also Black, Latinx, AAPI, or Native

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<sup>1</sup> [Why Hate Crimes Are on the Rise | Harvard Divinity School](#), April, 23, 2019. "[Return to Main Document](#)"

<sup>2</sup> [Can Hate-Crime Laws Be Used in Atlanta Shootings? - WSJ](#) March 18, 2021 "[Return to Main Document](#)"

<sup>3</sup> [Disability-Related Hate Crimes Up Sharply, FBI Data Shows - Disability Scoop](#), November 14, 2019 "[Return to Main Document](#)"

American.

Federal hate crimes are in Section 249 of the main U.S. criminal code.<sup>4</sup> Hate crimes are important for peace officers to understand, because the punishment for committing a hate crime is much more severe than general crimes.

AB 57 is a bill that will strengthen training requirements for peace officers and require improved guidance, outreach, data collection and reporting by the California Department of Justice. Unfortunately, the data collection on hate crimes is much lower than it should be, and the disability community hopes to continue to work to improve the recognition of hate incidents and hate crimes against all marginalized groups.

For these reasons, DRC supports this bill. Please contact me if you have any questions about our position or if I can provide any further information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Eric Harris", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Eric Harris  
Director of Public Policy  
Disability Rights California

cc: Honorable Members, Senate Appropriations Committee  
Honorable Jesse Gabriel, California State Assembly  
Jenny Berg, Consultant, Office of Assembly Member Gabriel

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<sup>4</sup> [Why hate crime data can't capture the true scope of anti-Asian violence - KTVZ](#), March 18, 2021 ["Return to Main Document"](#)