



**LEGISLATION &
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April 17, 2019

Honorable Reginald Byron Jones-Sawyer, Sr.
Chair, Public Safety Committee
California State Assembly
Capitol Building, Room 2117
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 1422 (GIPSON) as introduced February 22, 2019 – SUPPORT

Dear Assembly Member Jones-Sawyer, Sr.:

Disability Rights California (DRC), a non-profit advocacy organization that advances and protects the rights of Californians with disabilities, **supports AB 1422**. This bill is scheduled for hearing before Assembly Public Safety Committee on April 23, 2019.

Existing law makes specified criminal acts punishable as a hate crime if it is committed in whole or in part because of one or more actual or perceived designated characteristics of the victim, including disability, gender, nationality, race or ethnicity, religion, or sexual orientation. This bill would add “homeless status,” as defined, to the list of hate crime categories.

The number of attacks against persons experiencing homelessness nationwide has increased over the years, even though crimes against the homeless are reported at lower rates than other crimes. California has had serious and unaddressed problems of crime against homeless persons, including homeless persons with disabilities. In its 2016-17 annual report, for example, the National Coalition for the Homeless (NCH) documented 112 violent attacks against homeless individuals across 30 states, 48 of which resulted in death. NCH notes that “[a]n astonishing 33% of attacks reported in 2016-2017 took place in California.”ⁱ Several jurisdictions,

including Florida, Maryland, Maine and Washington D.C., have enacted laws making attacks on homeless people a hate crime. It is time that California follow suit.

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.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Curtis Child". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Curtis" and last name "Child" clearly distinguishable.

Curtis Child
Legislative Director
Disability Rights California

cc: Honorable Members, Assembly Public Safety Committee
Matthew Fleming, Counsel, Assembly Public Safety Committee
Honorable Mike Gipson, California State Assembly
Emmanuel Aguayo, Caucus Consultant, Office of Assembly Member
Gipson
Gary Olson, Consultant, Republican Caucus Committee

ⁱⁱ *Vulnerable to Hate: A Survey of Bias-Motivated Violence against People Experiencing Homelessness in 2016-2017* (NCH, December 2018), https://nationalhomeless.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/hate-crimes-2016-17-final_for-web2.pdf. [“Return to Main Document”](#)