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PRESS RELEASE

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Attorney General Brown Announces Appointments to the Newly Formed Maryland Commission on Hate Crime Response and Prevention

BALTIMORE, MD (August 2, 2023) – Maryland Attorney General Anthony G. Brown is pleased to announce appointments to the newly formed Maryland Commission on Hate Crime Response and Prevention. The Commission is composed of 20 stakeholders from a cross-section of law enforcement, state and local institutions, and organizations representing communities targeted by hate crimes.

During Attorney General Brown’s first 100 days in office, he successfully pursued several key legislative priorities focused on his mission of justice and equity, including the transformation of his office’s existing Hate Crimes Task Force into a permanent body known as the Maryland Commission on Hate Crime Response and Prevention. In May, the General Assembly passed [HB1066](#), creating the Commission that now offers Marylanders a permanent, long-term mechanism to address hate crimes at the state level. Governor Wes Moore signed the bill into law, and the Commission went into effect in June.

“I am honored and humbled by the energy, expertise, and passion of these appointees who are stepping up for all Marylanders, creating structure for our governing authorities to stem the tide of underreported crimes and bias incidents, and providing relief to people affected by these divisive acts,” **explained Attorney General Brown.** “Marylanders deserve a safe and inclusive State, and we’re here to listen, to report, and, most importantly, to act. This Commission will give a voice to those who may have been too afraid to speak up,”

The Commission, which is chaired by Attorney General Brown, will evaluate state laws and policies on hate crimes and develop strategies to address them. The Commission will submit annual reports on its policy and legislative recommendations to the Maryland State Department of Education and the Maryland General Assembly, beginning on December 1, 2024.

The Maryland Commission on Hate Crime Response and Prevention is comprised of the following members:

Chair, Office of the Attorney General – Maryland Attorney General Anthony G. Brown

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The Anti-Defamation League – Ms. Meredith Weisel
The Asian-American and Pacific Islander Commission of Howard County – Dr. Lanlan Xu
The Baltimore Jewish Council – Ms. Sarah Mersky Miicke
The Coalition Opposed to Violence and Extremism – Ms. Ra’mona Brown-Carter
The Council on American-Islamic Relations – Ms. Zainab Chaudry
Disability Rights Maryland – Mx. Sam Williamson
FreeState Justice – Mr. Phillip Westry
The Immigration Outreach Service Center – Ms. Pat Jones
The Jewish Community Relations Council of Greater Washington – Ms. Debbie Miller
The Maryland Association of Human Relations/Rights Agencies – Ms. Yolanda Sonnier
The Maryland Center for School Safety – Ms. Kate Bryan
The Maryland Chiefs of Police Association – Mr. Darryl McSwain
The Maryland Commission on Civil Rights – Mr. Cleveland L. Horton, II
The Maryland Coordination and Analysis Center – Mr. Dave Engel
The Maryland Sheriffs’ Association – Mr. Everett Sesker
The Maryland State’s Attorneys’ Association – Mr. Steven Kroll
The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People – Mr. Willie Flowers
The National Alliance of Mental Illness Maryland – Ms. Kate Farinholt
The Pride Center of Maryland – Dr. Cleo Manago
The Sikh Coalition – Mr. Joraver Singh
Towson University – Mr. Larry M. Bell, Jr.
The Women’s Law Center – Ms. Laure Ruth

Hiring is underway for a full-time Assistant Attorney General who will be dedicated to the Commission and the handling of our Office’s response to hate crime activity.

The Maryland Commission on Hate Crime Response and Prevention is the culmination of a multi-year effort, beginning in 2016, by the Maryland Office of Attorney General to combat an increasing number of hate crimes and hate bias incidents across the state. Those efforts include the creation of our Hate Crimes Hotline, the former OAG Hate Crimes Task Force (which is now the Commission), and a 2021 Department of Justice (DOJ) Award. Using those DOJ grant funds, planning and development are currently underway for an online hate crime and hate bias incident reporting portal. Also ongoing, in partnership with Maryland State Police, is the formation of training for state and local law enforcement on how to respond to and report hate crimes and hate bias incidents most effectively. Additionally, Attorney General Brown is hosting Regional Hate Bias Reporting Forums. The first took place this past spring in western Maryland, and two additional forums are scheduled for fall 2023.

State law requires law enforcement to report hate crimes and bias incidents; however, many incidents often go unreported. Reporting is the key to understanding how pervasive acts of hate are occur within communities. To report a hate crime or hate bias incident, please contact our Hate Crimes Hotline at **1-866-481-8361**. In the event of an emergency, always call **911**.

<https://www.marylandattorneygeneral.gov/press/2023/080223.pdf>