



PRESS RELEASE
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**Virginia Advisory Committee to the U. S. Commission on Civil Rights
Issues Public Statement Condemning the Rise in Hate Crimes and Violence Targeted at
Asian-Americans and Pacific Islanders and in Anti-Semitic Incidents in the U.S.**

The Virginia Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights released a [public statement](#) condemning the recent rise in Anti-Asian and Anti-Semitic hate crimes and incidents in Virginia and across the U.S.

The statement comes following a rise in bias-motivated, often violent incidents targeting the Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) community, and the Jewish community, in Virginia and elsewhere across the country. In late 2020, the Committee concluded a [study](#) of hate crime statistics and incidents in Virginia. In its statement, the Committee urges the Commission to draw upon information from this study in response to the present rise in hate crimes targeting Asian and Jewish Americans. While acknowledging the important progress marked by the recent signing of the Covid-19 Hate Crimes Act,¹ the Committee urges the Commission to recommend that in future legislation, Congress include focused training for law enforcement and first responders to correctly identify and effectively respond to hate crimes, and support for community service providers to partner with law enforcement as they respond to hate crimes.

Committee Chair K. Shiek Pal said, “As an Asian-American myself, the recent wave of AAPI hate crimes has struck deeply with me and made the work of our Advisory Committee all the more resonant. Similarly, anyone engaged in civil rights work understands the horrific history and magnitude of anti-Semitism. The fact that our nation is simultaneously confronting spikes in both areas, is deeply troubling and underscores the urgency which must be brought to bear in identifying and preventing hate crimes against all communities.”

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The U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, established by the Civil Rights Act of 1957, is the only independent, bipartisan agency charged with advising the President and Congress on civil rights and reporting annually on federal civil rights enforcement. Our 51 state Advisory Committees offer a broad perspective on civil rights concerns at state and local levels. The Commission: in our 7th decade, a continuing legacy of influence in civil rights. For information about the Commission, please visit <http://www.usccr.gov> and follow us on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).

¹ COVID 19 Hate Crimes Act, Pub. L. No. 117-13, 135 Stat. 265, (codified at 34 U.S.C. § 30501 statutory notes), <https://www.congress.gov/bills/117/congress/senate/bills/937/text>