



The Leadership Conference
Education Fund

Cause for Concern 2024:

The State of Hate

April 2023



Acknowledgments

Cause for Concern 2024: The State of Hate is an initiative of The Leadership Conference Education Fund.

The Leadership Conference Education Fund was founded in 1969 as the education and research arm of The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, the nation's oldest and largest civil and human rights coalition of more than 230 national organizations. For more than five decades, The Education Fund has served as a force multiplier and has amplified the call for a just, inclusive, and fair democracy.

Staff assistance was provided by Nadia Aziz, Anita Banerji, Simon Brand, Chris Canning, Mattie Goldman, Liz King, Patrick McNeil, Eunic Ortiz, Chanel Sherrod, Scott Simpson, and Dave Toomey. Overall supervision was provided by Jesselyn McCurdy and Corrine Yu. The report was designed by Natalie Goffney.

We would like to thank members of The Leadership Conference's Hate Crimes Task Force who provided valuable input and assisted in reviewing sections of the content, including: the Anti-Defamation League, Arab American Institute Foundation, Asian Americans Advancing Justice | AAJC, Bend the Arc, Human Rights Campaign, National Disability Rights Network, Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism, Sikh Coalition, the Southern Poverty Law Center, and UnidosUS.

Cause for Concern 2024: The State of Hate is the most recent publication in The Leadership Conference Education Fund's "Cause for Concern" series first published in 1997. This newest publication outlines an unmistakable pattern that has emerged during the last four presidential campaign cycles: Reported hate crimes increase during elections. "Cause for Concern 2024" provides recommendations for how to address the current state of hate as we approach a deeply concerning 2024 election cycle.

The author and publisher are solely responsible for the accuracy of statements and interpretations contained in this publication.

Table of Contents

4	Executive Summary
6	Troubling Trends
10	The State of Hate: 2021
11	Cause for Concern: Looking Ahead
13	Recommendations
15	Appendix
20	Endnotes

Executive Summary

Each of the last four presidential campaign cycles has shown an unmistakable pattern: Reported hate crimes increase during elections. And while not all hate crimes and hate incidents are committed by white supremacists, as this paper outlines, white supremacists have been particularly active during the last four presidential elections. From the mainstreaming of hate and the failure of social media platforms to adequately address disinformation, the current climate is rife with opportunities for the trend of increased hate to continue into the 2024 election — unless action is taken.

In March 2023, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) released the most recent statistics on hate crimes. These data showed that 2021 was the highest year on record for reported hate crimes since the FBI began publishing the data in 1991.¹ But because law enforcement agencies do not have to report any data on hate crimes to the FBI, this is not the full picture. In fact, 2021 had the lowest amount of participation from law enforcement agencies since 2012.² Even though the most recent data show the highest number of reported hate crimes on record, we know the reality is far worse.

Tragically, since 2015, reported hate crimes have nearly doubled. The Trump candidacy empowered white nationalists and provided them with a platform³ — one they had been seeking with renewed intensity since the historic election of America’s first Black president in 2008. Since 2015, communities across the country have experienced some of the most violent and deadliest years for hate in modern history.

Today’s political climate is highly charged. From white supremacist and anti-government movements coalescing and moving more into the political mainstream, to conspiracy theories circulating online and public officials amplifying hate, there are few — if any — signs that tensions will lessen. Movements grounded in attempts to whitewash history and deny the rights of the LGBTQ+ community have turned hate into campaign platforms.

Contributing to this climate are social media companies that have not internalized the lessons of the past and have set the stage for a 2024 election year that is at least as toxic online as past elections. Platforms have policies in place that curb and prevent the spread of hate and voting disinformation, but they do not consistently enforce them.⁴ Furthermore, major platforms have cut back or eliminated their trust and safety staff and hollowed out protections against hate incitements on their platforms.

In this paper — the most recent publication in The Leadership Conference Education Fund’s “Cause for Concern” series first published in 1997 — we provide the following recommendations for how to address the current state of hate ahead of a deeply concerning 2024 election cycle:

- Social media platforms must invest in de-platforming hate for the upcoming local, state, and national elections.
- The federal government must confront and address white supremacist violence without further criminalizing communities of color, religious minorities, and other marginalized communities.
- Congress must mandate hate crime data collection and reporting.
- Public officials must speak out against hate.



Troubling Trends

According to research and historical data from the FBI, hate incidents and violence tend to increase around general elections.⁵ This has largely been the case since the FBI began publishing hate crime data in 1991. In more recent election cycles, white supremacist hate, and specifically white nationalists, have played a role in driving this trend.

White supremacy is a racist ideology that rests on the belief that the white race is inherently superior to all other races. White nationalism has been used as an “attempt to cloak white supremacist ideas” in the language of racial separatism.⁶ Antisemitism is specifically a key component of white nationalist ideology. In the past decade, antisemitic conspiracy theories have been expressed both in the dark corners of the web and by elected officials and people with power and influence — including the spread of conspiracy theories that play off long-standing antisemitic stereotypes and tropes. One example of this is the myth of the “Great Replacement.” This idea is core to white nationalism and says that white people are being systematically replaced by people of color through immigration — which some claim is a strategy orchestrated by Jewish people.⁷

While it is important to note that not all hate crimes or hate incidents are committed by white supremacists, the threat of white supremacist violence has become an increasingly serious problem during the past four presidential election cycles and has been identified by the FBI as the greatest domestic threat to the United States.⁸

The amplification of hate and the widely unchecked circulation of conspiracy theories have consequences. For example, in 2017, white nationalists shouted racist and antisemitic chants — including “Jews will not replace us” — as they marched in Charlottesville, Virginia. Perpetrators of mass hate violence have cited these racist, antisemitic conspiracies as motivating factors for their attacks — from the Tree of Life synagogue in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, to a Walmart in El Paso, Texas, and a supermarket in Buffalo, New York. These conspiracies have had deadly consequences and demonstrate that the fight against hate is intersectional.

2008 Election Cycle

The 2008 presidential election was historic. For many, the joy and pride they experienced on November 4, 2008, when the United States elected its first Black president, is something they will never forget. The celebration of a moment they thought may never come was energizing.

For others, the 2008 election was distressing and enraging — and energizing for a different, hateful reason. Providing a clear sign that the racial demographics of the United States were shifting, white nationalists, neo-Nazis, and anti-government militia movements began to organize. Indeed, research has shown that 2008 served as a “rebirth” of the anti-government militia movement from the 1990s.⁹ As the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) has documented, after falling off the radar for nearly a decade, the far-right, anti-government militia movement returned — and with a Black president leading the United States, the movement grew more politically engaged.

The final weeks of the 2008 election saw an increase in hate crimes targeting racial and ethnic minorities.¹⁰ Less than a month before Election Day, two white supremacists were arrested for planning to kill Black school children and assassinate then-Senator Obama.¹¹ Just days after President Obama was elected, a Black church was burned to the ground. From church burnings to physical assaults, an increase in violence and hate was also evident in the immediate aftermath of the election of President Barack Obama.¹²

According to the FBI, there were 2,951 reported anti-Black hate crimes in 2008 as racial tension grew during the run-up to and aftermath of that year’s presidential election. Anti-Black hate crimes spiked in 2008 — and while they have remained high since then, 2021 was the first year since 2008 where reported anti-Black hate crimes surpassed 2008 numbers.

2012 Election Cycle

Still responding to the electoral popularity of President Obama and more robust social and economic policies, white nationalists and some media commentators spoke of the end of “traditional America.”¹³ Some white nationalist leaders saw 2012 as their last chance to make their case to “white America” and used the reelection of President Obama as an opportunity to recruit and mobilize like-minded individuals.

Reported hate crimes increased in 2012 by about 5 percent from the previous year.¹⁴ One especially devastating hate crime occurred on August 5, when a white supremacist opened fire in a gurdwara in Oak Creek, Wisconsin — killing six. The Department of Justice labeled this mass shooting both as a hate crime and as an act of terror. This was the first mass hate crime in what would soon become a pattern of white nationalists targeting houses of worship and other public places.

2016 Election Cycle

The 2016 election cycle saw amplification of organized hate groups by elected officials and candidates, bringing the content to a broader American audience. When candidate Trump announced his campaign for president in 2015, he immediately set the tone of his campaign — and began fanning the flames of hate and emboldening white supremacists.

Hate crimes have been on the rise since 2015 and have not returned to pre-2016 election cycle numbers. Since Trump announced his campaign in 2015, the political climate has only grown more divisive, and organized white supremacist and anti-government movements have organized, coalesced, and merged into more spaces.

The 2016 election cycle saw devastating acts of violence. On June 17, 2015, a white supremacist who sought to start a “race war” targeted Mother Emanuel AME Church in Charleston, South Carolina, killing nine Black churchgoers. Anti-Muslim bigotry was a clear trend in 2016 campaign rhetoric, and it had an impact on American Muslims and those perceived to be Muslim. In addition to mosques and Islamic centers experiencing threats and hate, the day after President Trump signed the first “Muslim ban” executive order, a mosque in Victoria, Texas was burned to the ground. Anti-Muslim hate crimes increased by nearly 70 percent from 2014 to 2015.¹⁵ The following year saw an additional 26 percent increase.

American Muslims were, of course, not the only community to experience increased hate during the 2016 election cycle. The Latino and immigrant communities were also the target of violent hate and white supremacist harassment and threats.¹⁶

Another devastating act of mass hate violence occurred on June 12, 2016, at the Pulse nightclub in Orlando, Florida. While the FBI did not classify this shooting as a hate crime, 49 people — many of whom were Latino — were killed during the attack that targeted the LGBTQ+ community.

The month President Trump was elected in 2016, our country saw the highest number of hate crimes reported in more than a decade.¹⁷ Overall, the 2016 election cycle had a broad impact on the United States. In The Leadership Conference Education Fund’s report “Hate Magnified,” 66 percent of respondents felt that incidents or expressions of hate were getting worse, and 43 percent of respondents stated they experienced or witnessed a hate expression or incident in the previous two years.¹⁸

The devastation from the 2016 election cycle, and the surge it provided to white supremacists, did not end in 2016. Indeed, during Trump’s second year in office, hard-right racist groups organized a “Unite the Right” rally in Charlottesville, Virginia, where rally-goers shouted racist and antisemitic chants. The two-day event ended with a deadly car attack in which one person was killed and more than 30 were injured.



2020 Election Cycle

Even though hate crimes have been on the rise since 2015, 2020 saw a jump of more than 13 percent in reported hate crimes and a violent backlash against the racial justice protests of 2020. In his statement regarding the 2020 hate crime data release, Attorney General Merrick Garland stated: “These statistics show a rise in hate crimes committed against Black and African Americans, already the group most victimized.”¹⁹ The FBI reported 2,755 anti-Black hate crimes in 2020 — an increase from the 1,972 in 2019.²⁰

In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic and the anti-Asian bigotry stoked by public figures, major cities in the United States also saw an alarming increase in anti-Asian hate crimes from 2019 to 2020 – nearly a 150 percent increase.²¹ In April 2020, Chinese for Affirmative Action and AAPI Equity Alliance released a report based on data they collected over the previous four weeks about incidents of coronavirus-related discrimination.²² Between March 19 and April 15, 1,497 incidences of coronavirus-related discrimination were reported, including 219 incidents that reported either a physical assault or being coughed and spat on.

The State of Hate: 2021

Hate crimes have increased by more than 80 percent since 2015.

On March 13, 2023, the FBI released “Supplemental Hate Crime Statistics, 2021,” which revealed the most reported hate crimes since the data were first published in 1991.²³ In contrast to the historically high number of reported hate crimes, 2021 also included the fewest number of law enforcement agencies reporting hate crime data since 2012.²⁴

The March 2023 supplemental report included data from both the National Incident Based Reporting System (NIBRS) and the Summary Reporting System (SRS). These data, while far from perfect, provide a more robust snapshot of the state of hate than the originally released data in December 2022. The data not only show a nearly 31 percent increase from 2020, but also the highest number of reported hate crime incidents since the FBI began publishing the data in 1991.²⁵

The FBI’s Hate Crime Statistics Program report is based on data from incidents reported to law enforcement. Yet many people do not report incidents to law enforcement for several reasons, including a historic distrust, concern that law enforcement would not take their report seriously, fear of reprisal, and other reasons. For the incident to make it into the FBI’s annual report, law enforcement must record it in their system as a hate crime and then voluntarily submit the data to the FBI.²⁶ As this process demonstrates, there are many opportunities for a hate crime to fall through the cracks — resulting in widespread underreporting.

Another source of government hate crime data comes from DOJ’s National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS). This survey uses a different methodology and includes hate crime incidents that were both reported and not reported to law enforcement. A striking gap is revealed when comparing the two data sets. NCVS data demonstrate that most hate crime victimizations (66 percent) go unreported to law enforcement. And while the FBI’s 2021 supplemental data included 10,840 hate crimes, the NCVS documented an average of 243,770 hate crime victimizations in the United States from 2010 to 2019 — which would mean that an average of about 28 hate crime victimizations occur in this country every hour.²⁷

Despite being notoriously underreported, the FBI’s data demonstrate trends that have aligned with the experiences of communities across the country — and the trends have been supported by research produced by community organizations.

Cause for Concern: Looking Ahead

The current political climate and lack of accountability from social media platforms have worked hand in hand, creating outsized harm and establishing a significant cause for concern in the lead up to the 2024 election.

The small number of well-funded and well-organized proponents of bigotry and hate are having an outsized effect relative to their actual numbers. In a recent national survey, 80 percent or more of parents said that it was very or extremely important that their child be honest, ethical, hardworking, helpful to those in need, and accepting of people who are different from them.²⁸ Similarly, 80 percent of parents want to protect the ability of young people to have access to information where they can learn about and understand different perspectives and help them grow into adults who can think for themselves.²⁹

Nonetheless, with the assistance of more than 160 local and national groups, campaigns to whitewash U.S. history and deny the rights of the LGBTQ+ community have turned hate into campaign platforms.³⁰ Even with a small constituency, these groups have made considerable inroads in the halls of power.

Attacks on teaching about race and gender, and attacks on school diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts (so-called “bans on CRT”), led to a wave of legislation across state and federal legislatures. Since 2020, more than 350 pieces of so-called “anti-critical race theory” legislation have been introduced in legislatures across the country — and of those introduced, 33 have already been adopted. This effort is a backlash to the racial reckoning of 2020 when the murder of George Floyd and resulting movement for justice prompted long overdue attention to structural racism — including how U.S. history is being taught in schools.³¹ In 2022, 315 anti-LGBTQ+ bills were introduced in state legislatures across the country. Of these, 29 passed. Most of these bills targeted the transgender community, and especially transgender children.

Even the introduction of legislation itself is a cause for concern because we know that hate crimes increase during election cycles — a time when rhetoric and public dialogue tend to be more divisive and, in recent years, more inflammatory. Government-sanctioned discrimination and bigotry, as reflected in legislation to ban books, gag teachers, or marginalize transgender children, contribute to the normalization of hatred.

Contributing to the fact that attacks on equity and inclusion have garnered more attention than they have support from parents is the fact that social media platforms have not adequately addressed disinformation. As outlined in the Human Rights Campaign’s “Digital Hate” report in 2022, the “frequency with which hate appears in our feeds normalizes untrue narratives, infecting millions of users, and then extremist politicians, seeking power, play to those misinformed audiences, treating their highly visible misbeliefs as though they are a legitimate evidence base for hateful, demonizing policies.”³²

A wave of hateful disinformation claiming that LGBTQ+ people “groom” children has spread widely on social media, contributing to the introduction of more than 300 anti-LGBTQ+ bills in state legislatures. Social media giant Meta profited off anti-LGBTQ+ advertisements and failed to act in a manner consistent with their stated policies.³³ Similarly, Twitter failed to enforce its “hateful conduct” policy by failing to act on 99 percent of the most viewed hateful tweets identified by researchers.³⁴

Similarly, the antisemitic, xenophobic “great replacement” conspiracy — which has inspired many deadly hate crimes — has garnered increased attention. Some elected officials have even promoted the conspiracy, providing a false sense of legitimacy. Other harmful content that has circulated online has included the “big lie,” the targeting of Asian Americans, and disinformation about anti-racist education.

When social media platforms use algorithms that amplify hate, fail to enforce their own policies against hate, and profit off the targeting of communities, people suffer — and democracy is undermined.



Recommendations

Social media platforms must invest in de-platforming hate for the upcoming local, state, and national elections.

Social media companies need to be accountable for their role in the increase in hate crimes. Meta, Twitter, and YouTube should ensure they are resourcing content moderation teams appropriately to meet the challenge of increased hate leading up to the 2024 general election, including the ability to monitor livestreamed content that is increasingly being used by white nationalists. In the wake of mass layoffs, these companies must re-build their teams that monitor disinformation, safety, and content moderation. Platforms should be able to capture unauthentic behavior and disinformation campaigns before the disinformation spreads and act swiftly to remove accounts that engage in or purposefully share disinformation.

Lastly, companies should close loopholes that allow candidates and public figures to espouse disinformation, and they should prohibit advertisements that would otherwise violate their community standards.

The federal government must confront and address white supremacist violence without further criminalizing communities of color, religious minorities, and other marginalized communities.

Hate crime enforcement has long been a civil rights issue. Confronting white supremacist violence is in large part why the Department of Justice's Civil Rights Division was founded. Yet, in more recent years, hate crimes have increasingly been framed in a national security context as acts of domestic terrorism. This is in part because there is an overlap in the legal definitions of a hate crime and an act of domestic terrorism, and in part because of what legal and investigative authorities are allowed for the different classifications. The federal government must confront white supremacist violence and hate crimes through the civil rights infrastructure — and must not double down on a national security apparatus that has historically harmed racial, religious, and ethnic minorities.³⁵

Congress must make hate crime data reporting mandatory.

The Hate Crimes Statistics Act of 1990, which was modified in 2009, requires the attorney general to collect data on hate crimes. It does not, however, require law enforcement agencies to submit the data to the Department of Justice or FBI — leading to a major undercount of hate crimes.

What is included in federal hate crime statistics is just as important as what is excluded — the stories of those directly impacted by hate. Every data point is a story. Without mandatory hate crime reporting, too many stories go untold and unheard. To counter the scourge of hate crimes and hate incidents, we need to better understand what communities are experiencing. We need to hear the stories.

On August 12, 2019, Haifa Jabara and Susan Bro published an editorial in The New York Times, sharing with the world the devastating story of why their paths crossed. They shared that August 12 was forever ingrained in their memories, as it was the date their children were murdered in hate crimes — exactly one year apart from each other. In 2016, Haifa’s son Khalid was shot and killed by a neighbor in an anti-Arab hate crime on the front steps of his family home in Tulsa, Oklahoma. One year later, Susan’s daughter, Heather Heyer, was killed on the crowded streets of Charlottesville, Virginia. Haifa and Susan also shared that, despite the high-profile murders being prosecuted as hate crimes, neither was originally reported as a hate crime in official government data. They wrote, “In the eyes of the government, they were not even data points.”³⁶

Regrettably, the stories of Khalid Jabara and Heather Heyer are not an exception to the rule — they are an example of how easily hate crimes can fall through the cracks.

In May 2021, President Biden signed the COVID-19 Hate Crimes Act — which includes the Khalid Jabara and Heather Heyer NO HATE Act — into law. Among other things, this law improves hate crime data collection and reporting. And while it is a significant step in the right direction, the next step must be mandatory hate crime data reporting.

Public officials must speak out against hate.

Hate crimes are message crimes. To help counter the impact of hate crimes, we must counter the message the perpetrators seek to send. Anti-Black racism, antisemitism, xenophobia, transphobia, and all forms of hate should be excluded from campaign tactics. Public officials should use their platforms to speak out against hate — not only does it send a message of inclusion to those targeted, but speaking out against hate can reduce the amount of hate crimes committed.



Appendix

Hate Crimes Motivated by Bias Against a Race, Ethnicity, or Ancestry

Anti-Arab Hate Crimes

In their report, “Underreported Under Threat,” the Arab American Institute Foundation (AAIF) detailed the history of anti-Arab hate in the United States. AAIF explains that the historical negative portrayal of Arabs by the media and entertainment industries — as well as discriminatory government policies, a political climate of exclusion, and the “backlash” effect to acts of mass violence — have all contributed to the targeting of Arab Americans.³⁷ Anti-Arab hate, which is based on ethnicity and ancestry, has often been conflated with anti-Muslim sentiment and vice versa.

2021 was only the sixth consecutive year that the FBI has published data on anti-Arab hate since the anti-Arab category (Bias Motivation Code 31) was removed from the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) program before being reinstated in 2015. The data showed a nearly 50 percent increase in reported anti-Arab hate crimes from 2020 to 2021.

Anti-Asian American and Pacific Islander Hate Crimes

As noted in The Leadership Conference Education Fund’s 2009 report “Confronting the New Faces of Hate: Hate Crimes in America,” ignorance, racism, and anti-immigrant sentiment lead to hate violence against Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders.³⁸ From the Chinese Exclusion Act to the incarceration of Japanese Americans during World War II, and the vicious murder of Vincent Chin — anti-Asian hate has long been a part of U.S. history. Most recently, the Asian community experienced an alarming increase in hate in the wake of the global COVID-19 pandemic and growing anti-China rhetoric from elected officials.

The most recent data from the FBI showed a 168 percent increase in anti-Asian hate crime incidents reported from 2020 to 2021. Similarly, reported anti-Asian hate crimes increased 60 percent from 2019 to 2020. In addition, anti-Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander hate crimes more than doubled from 2020 to 2021.³⁹ 2021 was a devastating year for the Asian American community that included a deadly shooting in Atlanta, Georgia on March 16, 2021, in which the perpetrator targeted Asian-run businesses — killing eight people, six of whom were Asian women.

Stop AAPI Hate, which launched in March 2020 due to the increase in anti-AAPI hate in the wake of COVID-19, documented more than 11,000 hate incidents over a two-year period. While a small percentage of hate incidents meet the definition of a hate crime, it demonstrates an increase in the targeted hate that the AAPI community has been experiencing.⁴⁰ Further, in a national survey in the fall of 2021, Stop AAPI Hate found that one in five Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders had experienced a hate incident in 2020 or 2021.

Anti-Black or African American Hate Crimes

Anti-Black or African American violence remains the “prototypical hate crime.”⁴¹ These crimes have an especially negative impact on society for the devastating history they conjure. From the racial terror of lynchings and cross and church burnings, to the murders of Emmett Till and James Byrd, Jr., to the massacres at the Mother Emanuel Church in Charleston, South Carolina and a Tops Supermarket in Buffalo, New York — Black Americans remain the most frequent victims of hate crimes.

The FBI reported a 14 percent increase in anti-Black hate crimes from 2020 to 2021. This follows a 46 percent increase from 2019 to 2020, when there was a violent backlash to the racial justice protests of 2020.⁴²

Anti-Hispanic or Latino Hate Crimes

Anti-immigrant sentiment has long contributed to hate targeting the Hispanic and Latino communities. In 1999, UnidosUS (at the time known as the National Council of La Raza), published “The Mainstreaming of Hate” — which documented a marked increase in the targeting of Hispanic and Latino communities. This report, from more than 20 years ago, sadly remains relevant. As noted in this report, “the perception that Latinos are ‘foreign,’ ‘un-American,’ or illegal immigrants has translated into numerous incidents of discrimination, threats, and actual violence involving private citizens and vigilantes.”⁴³

More than 20 years later, this anti-Latino and anti-immigrant rhetoric has become increasingly prevalent as mainstream news outlets, public officials, and, most recently, digital and social media platforms alike have scaled the perpetuation of hate and bias towards Latinos.⁴⁴ Anti-Latino and, specifically, anti-Mexican rhetoric was a central part of Donald Trump’s campaign for president in 2016. Indeed, he set the tone of what to expect during his announcement speech in 2015 when he referred to Mexican immigrants as “rapists” and drug dealers.⁴⁵ This racist rhetoric continued throughout his presidency and contributed to devastating violence against Hispanic and Latino communities.

In 2018, the Hispanic and Latino communities experienced the highest number of reported hate crimes in more than a decade. Regrettably, this alarming trend did not stop in 2018. In 2019, 23 people were killed and more than 20 were injured in a mass hate crime in El Paso, Texas. This remains the deadliest attack on Latinos in the United States in modern history. Notably, the day before the El Paso attack, Texas Governor Greg Abbott released a fundraising letter exclaiming the need to “defend Texas” from immigrants crossing the U.S.-Mexico border.⁴⁶ The El Paso shooter’s manifesto mirrored this same language, as he claimed to be “simply defending my country from cultural and ethnic replacement.”⁴⁷ This link underscores the ways that anti-Latino xenophobia continues to be weaponized for political gain, is perpetuated by mainstream news and social media platforms, and directly influences the increased targeting of Latinos for hate-fueled violence. Indeed, the 2021 FBI data showed the highest number of anti-Hispanic hate crimes ever reported — a 35 percent increase from 2020.⁴⁸

This is not an all-inclusive list of communities targeted for hate based on race, ethnicity, or ancestry. The FBI also collects data on anti-American Indian or Alaska Native, Anti-Multiple Races, and Anti-Other Race/Ethnicity/Ancestry.

Hate Crimes Motivated by Bias Against a Religion

Anti-Islamic (Muslim) Hate Crimes

American Muslims continue to be targeted with mosque vandalism, street violence, and other threats to their safety — especially during charged election years. From 2020 to 2021, the community was subjected to a 40 percent increase in reported hate crimes. This comes after decades of violence stemming from bigotry and hateful campaign rhetoric.

While increases in hate crimes against American Muslims are often framed in terms of the aftermath of 9/11, recent election years have shown a frightening resurgence. Anti-Muslim and birtherist rhetoric against former President Obama date back to his first Senate election in 2006, when his opponent suggested he was not a “true Christian.”⁴⁹ Attacks on President Obama’s patriotism, faith, and citizenship continued, and they were amplified throughout and following his presidency and served as a pre-cursor to broader anti-Muslim rhetoric in the 2016 and 2020 campaigns.

Anti-Muslim campaign rhetoric and hate crimes peaked during Donald Trump’s campaigns for the presidency, with the spike in 2016 marking the highest number of reported hate crimes against the community since 2001.

Since then, American Muslims have been targeted in vehicular attacks, mosque bombings, vandalism, and assaults across the country.^{50, 51, 52}

Anti-Jewish Hate Crimes

As antisemitism has been used as a tool of division and fear, we have also seen an increase in anti-Jewish hate crimes and incidents.

The number of reported anti-Jewish hate crime incidents increased 20 percent from 2020 to 2021, according to the latest FBI report. And antisemitic incidents are also on the rise according to data collected by the Anti-Defamation League (ADL). ADL’s most recent Audit of Antisemitic Incidents, for example, documented a record high of 3,697 antisemitic incidents in 2022, a 36 percent increase from 2021.⁵³ While hate crimes make up only a small percentage of hate incidents, ADL documented a 26 percent increase in antisemitic assaults and a 51 percent increase in antisemitic vandalism incidents from 2021 to 2022.

Anti-Sikh Hate Crimes

Sikhs in the United States have faced bias and discrimination for generations, which can foreshadow systemic problems for the country. After 9/11, the first deadly hate crime in a larger wave of backlash targeted Balbir Singh Sodhi, a Sikh American who was murdered outside his gas station on September 15, 2001. In addition, one of the worst attacks on an American house of worship occurred on August 5, 2012, when a white supremacist initially murdered six Sikhs inside a gurdwara (Sikh house of worship) in Oak Creek, Wisconsin. Since then, more houses of worship from other faiths have been attacked.

The intersectionality of the racial, religious, and national origin identity of Sikhs makes them targets of hate often driven by xenophobia, anti-immigrant sentiments, and white supremacy. Since the FBI started tracking anti-Sikh hate crimes in 2015, Sikhs have consistently been among the top five most targeted religious communities. Furthermore, the number of reported anti-Sikh hate crimes has increased significantly, reaching a record high in 2021. Currently, anti-Sikh hate crimes are the second most common form of religiously motivated hate crimes after anti-Jewish hate crimes.

This is not an all-inclusive list of communities targeted for hate based on religion. The FBI also collects data on anti-Catholic, anti-Protestant, anti-Other Religion, anti-Multiple Religions, anti-Church of Jesus Christ, anti-Jehovah's Witness, anti-Eastern Orthodox (Russian, Greek, other), anti-Other Christian, anti-Buddhist, anti-Hindu, and anti-atheism/agnosticism. For this report's purposes, the top three categories from the 2021 data were included above.

Hate Crimes Motivated by Bias Against Sexual Orientation or Gender Identity

Anti-LGBTQ Hate Crimes

The LGBTQ+ community has been the target of discriminatory laws, conspiracy theories, organized hate, and hate crimes. From the Pulse nightclub shooting in Orlando, Florida, to the shooting at Club Q in Colorado Springs, Colorado, the amount of hate violence targeting the LGBTQ+ community has been staggering. As political rhetoric and anti-LGBTQ+ legislation has significantly increased, incidents of violence have as well.

While national data collection efforts fail to capture many hate crimes, reported numbers continue to demonstrate increases. Reported hate crimes based on sexual orientation increased 54 percent from 2020 to 2021, with anti-lesbian hate crimes increasing more than 80 percent, anti-LGBT (mixed group) increasing 70 percent, and anti-gay hate crimes increasing 40 percent.

The National Center for Transgender Equality notes that “one in four trans people have faced a bias-driven assault, and rates are higher for trans women and trans people of color.”⁵⁴ Reported hate crimes based on gender identity increased nearly 30 percent from 2020 to 2021, with a 15 percent increase in reported hate crimes targeting transgender individuals. Fatal violence, particularly against Black and Latina transgender women, occurs with startling frequency.⁵⁵

Hate Crimes Motivated by Bias Against Disability

Anti-Disability Hate Crimes

As noted in “Confronting the New Faces of Hate: Hate Crimes in America,” bias against people with disabilities takes many forms and often results in discriminatory actions in employment, housing, and public accommodations. It can also manifest in the form of violence and hate.

In 1994, the category of “disability” was added to the Hate Crimes Statistics Act of 1990. In 1997, the FBI began to collect data on anti-disability hate crimes under the Uniform Crime Reporting Program.

Reported anti-disability hate crimes increased nearly 17 percent from 2020 to 2021. The number of reported hate crimes based on mental health increased, while the number of reported hate crimes based on physical disability remained the same.

Endnotes

PAGE 4

1. Federal Bureau of Investigation. "Crime Data Explorer." March 2023.
<https://cde.ucr.cjis.gov/LATEST/webapp/#/pages/explorer/crime/hate-crime>.
2. *Ibid.*
3. Osnos, Evan. "How White Nationalist Groups Found Their Candidate in Donald Trump." *NPR*. September 3, 2015.
<https://www.npr.org/2015/09/03/437195328/how-white-nationalist-groups-found-their-candidate-in-donald-trump>.
4. Frankel, Sheera & Conger, Kate. "Hate Speech's Rise on Twitter is Unprecedented, Researchers Find." *The New York Times*. December 2, 2022.
<https://www.nytimes.com/2022/12/02/technology/twitter-hate-speech.html>.

PAGE 6

5. Davis, Kristina. "Hate crimes surge during presidential elections. So far 2020 isn't any different." *The San Diego Union-Tribune*. October 31, 2020.
<https://www.sandiegouniontribune.com/news/public-safety/story/2020-10-31/hate-crimes-surge-presidential-elections>.
6. See Southern Poverty Law Center. "White Nationalist.":
<https://www.splcenter.org/fighting-hate/extremist-files/ideology/white-nationalist>;
Anti-Defamation League. "White Nationalism." April, 14, 2017. Anti-Defamation League.
<https://www.adl.org/resources/glossary-term/white-nationalism>. and Clark, Simon. "How White Supremacy Returned to Mainstream Politics." *Center for American Progress*. July, 1, 2020.
<https://www.americanprogress.org/article/white-supremacy-returned-mainstream-politics/>.
7. Bend the Arc Antisemitism Guide, available at info@bendthearc.us.
8. Garland, Merrick. "Domestic Violent Extremism in America Hearing Before the Senate Committee on Appropriations." *Congress.gov*. May 12, 2021.
<https://www.congress.gov/117/chrg/CHRG-117shrg49554/CHRG-117shrg49554.pdf>.

PAGE 7

9. Southern Poverty Law Center. "The Second Wave: Return of the Militias." August 2009.
https://www.splcenter.org/sites/default/files/d6_legacy_files/downloads/The_Second_Wave.pdf. See Also Bilyeau, Nancy. "Resurgence of Far-Right Extremism Tied to Obama Election, Economic Trauma." *The Crime Report*. February 10, 2021.
<https://thecrimereport.org/2021/02/10/resurgence-of-far-right-extremism-tied-to-obama-election-economic-trauma/>

10. See Bigg, Matthew. "Election of Obama provokes rise in U.S. hate crimes." *Reuters*. November 24, 2008.
<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-obama-hatecrimes/election-of-obama-provokes-rise-in-u-s-hate-crimes-idUSTRE4AN81U20081124>.
11. Lichtblau, Eric. "Arrests in Plan to Kill Obama and Black Schoolchildren." *The New York Times*. October 28, 2008.
<https://www.nytimes.com/2008/10/28/us/politics/28plot.html>.
12. Bigg, Matthew. "Election of Obama provokes rise in U.S. hate crimes." *Reuters*. November 24, 2008.
<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-obama-hatecrimes/election-of-obama-provokes-rise-in-u-s-hate-crimes-idUSTRE4AN81U20081124>.
13. Berger, J.M. "The Awakening: Why white nationalists are thrilled with Obama's victory." *Foreign Policy*. November 13, 2012. <https://foreignpolicy.com/2012/11/13/the-awakening/>.
14. Federal Bureau of Investigation. "Crime Data Explorer." March 2023. <https://cde.ucr.cjis.gov/LATEST/webapp/#/pages/explorer/crime/hate-crime>.

PAGE 8

15. Sidahmed, Mazin. "FBI reports hate crimes against Muslims surged by 67% in 2015." *The Guardian*. November 14, 2016.
<https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2016/nov/14/fbi-anti-muslim-hate-crimes-rise-2015>.
16. Anguiano, Dani. "It's worse than ever: how Latinos are changing their lives in Trump's America." *The Guardian*. October 7, 2019.
<https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2019/oct/06/latinos-trump-hate-crimes-el-paso>.
17. Center for the Study of Hate & Extremism, California State University, San Bernadino. "Final U.S. Status Report: Hate Crime Analysis & Forecast for 2016/2017."
<https://www.csusb.edu/sites/default/files/Final%20Hate%20Crime%202017%20Status%20Report%20pdf.pdf>
18. The Leadership Conference Education Fund & Communities Against Hate. "Hate Magnified: Communities in Crisis." January 2019. <https://hatemagnified.org/>.

PAGE 9

19. Department of Justice. "Attorney General Issues Statement on 2020 FBI Hate Crimes in the United States Statistics." August 30, 2021.
<https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/attorney-general-garland-issues-statement-2020-fbi-hate-crimes-united-states-statistics>.
20. Federal Bureau of Investigation. "Crime Data Explorer." March 2023. <https://cde.ucr.cjis.gov/LATEST/webapp/#/pages/explorer/crime/hate-crime>.

21. Center for the Study of Hate and Extremism CSUSB. “Fact Sheet: Anti- Asian Prejudice March 2020-Center for the Study of Hate & Extremism.” <https://www.csusb.edu/sites/default/files/FACT%20SHEET-%20Anti-Asian%20Hate%202020%203.2.21.pdf>.
22. Jeung, Russell & Nham, Kai. “Incidents of Coronavirus-Related Discrimination.” *Asian Pacific Policy & Planning Council*. April 23, 2020. https://www.asianpacificpolicyandplanningcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/STOP_AAPI_HATE_MONTHLY_REPORT_4_23_20.pdf.

PAGE 10

23. U.S. Department of Justice Federal Bureau of Investigation Criminal Justice Information Division. “Supplemental Hate Crime Statistics, 2021.” March 2023. <https://cde.ucr.cjis.gov/LATEST/webapp/#/pages/explorer/crime/hate-crime>.
24. Federal Bureau of Investigation. “Crime Data Explorer.” March 2023. <https://cde.ucr.cjis.gov/LATEST/webapp/#/pages/explorer/crime/crime-trend>.
25. *Ibid.*
26. U.S. Department of Justice Federal Bureau of Investigation Bureau of Justice Statistics. “Bias-Motivated/Hate Crime.” <https://bjs.ojp.gov/topics/crime/hate-crime>.
27. U.S. Department of Justice Federal Bureau of Investigation Bureau of Justice Statistics “Hate Crime Victimization, 2005 – 2019.” September 2021. https://bjs.ojp.gov/sites/g/files/xyckuh236/files/media/document/hcv0519_1.pdf.

PAGE 11

28. Minkin, Rachel and Juliana Menasce Horowitz. “Parenting in America Today.” *Pew Research Center*. January 24, 2023. <https://www.pewresearch.org/social-trends/2023/01/24/parenting-in-america-today/>.
29. American Library Association. “Voters Oppose Book Bans in Libraries.” <https://www.ala.org/advocacy/voters-oppose-book-bans-libraries>.
30. Collins, Ben & Kingkade, Tyler & Zadrozny, Brandy. “Critical race theory battle invades school boards- with help from conservative groups.” *NBC News*. June 15, 2021. <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/critical-race-theory-invades-school-boards-help-conservative-groups-n1270794>.
31. Silva, Daniella. “Amid a racial reckoning, teachers are reconsidering how history is taught.” *NBC News*. August 14, 2020. <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/amid-racial-reckoning-teachers-are-reconsidering-how-history-taught-n1235806>.

PAGE 12

32. Center for Countering Digital Hate & Human Rights Campaign. “Digital Hate: Social Media’s Role in Amplifying Dangerous Lies about LGBTQ+ People.” 2022.
<https://hrc-prod-requests.s3-us-west-2.amazonaws.com/CCDH-HRC-Digital-Hate-Report-2022-single-pages.pdf>.

33. *Ibid.*

34. *Ibid.*

PAGE 13

35. The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights. “Confronting White Supremacist Violence: An Effective and Inclusive Path Forward.” December 1, 2022.
<https://civilrights.org/resource/confronting-white-supremacist-violence/>.

PAGE 14

36. Bro, Susan & Jabara, Haifa. “Hate Crimes Are Slipping Through the Cracks.” *The New York Times*. August 12, 2019.
<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/08/12/opinion/hate-crime-statistics-heather-heyer.html>.

PAGE 15

37. Arab American institute Foundation. “Underreported Under Threat.” July 2018. Pgs 19-20.
<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5faecb8fb23a85370058aed8/t/6020669176128b0db2fa9efd/1612736148542/Underreported+Under+Threat+%282%29.pdf>.
38. The Leadership Conference Education Fund. “Confronting the New Faces of Hate: Hate Crimes in America.” 2009.
39. Federal Bureau of Investigation. “Crime Data Explorer.” March 2023. <https://cde.ucr.cjis.gov/LATEST/webapp/#/pages/explorer/crime/crime-trend>.
40. Stop AAPI Hate. “Stop AAPI Hate National Report.” March 4, 2022.
<https://stopaapihate.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/22-SAH-NationalReport-3.1.22-v9.pdf>.

PAGE 16

41. The Leadership Conference Education Fund. “Confronting the New Faces of Hate: Hate Crimes in America.” Pg.25. 2009.
42. Federal Bureau of Investigation. “Crime Data Explorer.” March 2023. <https://cde.ucr.cjis.gov/LATEST/webapp/#/pages/explorer/crime/crime-trend>.
43. National Council of La Raza. “The Mainstreaming of Hate.” November 1999. Page iv.
https://issuu.com/nclr/docs/1377_file_hatecrimesrpt.

44. Janet Murguía. “Why we dread the second anniversary of El Paso shooting.” *UnidosUS Blog*. August 3, 2021. <https://www.unidosus.org/blog/2021/08/03/el-paso-shooting-second-anniversary/>; Robert Mackey. “Donald Trump and Fox News Warned of a Migrant “Invasion” Before El Paso Gunman Struck.” *The Intercept*. August 5, 2019. <https://theintercept.com/2019/08/05/el-paso-gunmans-fear-migrant-invasion-echoed-donald-trump-fox-news/>.
45. Phillips, Amber. “‘They’re rapists.’ President Trump’s campaign launch speech two years later, annotated.” *The Washington Post*. June 16, 2017. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/the-fix/wp/2017/06/16/theyre-rapists-presidents-trump-campaign-launch-speech-two-years-later-annotated/>.
46. Signal Staff. “Abbott Sends Out Anti-Immigrant Fundraising Letter Day Before El Paso Attack.” *The Texas Signal*. August 22, 2019. <https://texassignal.com/exclusive-abbott-sends-out-anti-immigrant-fundraising-letter-a-day-before-el-paso-attack/>.
47. *Ibid.*
48. Federal Bureau of Investigation. “Crime Data Explorer.” March 2023. <https://cde.ucr.cjis.gov/LATEST/webapp/#/pages/explorer/crime/crime-trend>.

PAGE 17

49. Gore, D’Angelo. “Eight years of Trolling Obama.” *FactCheck.org*. January 19, 2017. <https://www.factcheck.org/2017/01/eight-years-of-trolling-obama/>.
50. Deanna Paul. “A car barreled into eight people in California. Police say the driver was targeting Muslims.” *The Washington Post*. April 27, 2019. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/nation/2019/04/27/sunnyvale-crash-police-say-driver-was-intentionally-targeting-muslims/>.
51. Levenson, Michael. “Militia Leader Is Convicted in Bombing of a Minnesota Mosque.” *The New York Times*. December 9, 2020. <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/09/us/minnesota-militia-mosque-bombing.html>.
52. Kishi, Katayoun. “Assaults against Muslims in U.S. surpass 2001 level.” *Pew Research Center*. November 15, 2017. <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2017/11/15/assaults-against-muslims-in-u-s-surpass-2001-level/>.
53. Anti-Defamation League. “Audit of Antisemitic Incidents 2022.” March 3, 2023. <https://www.adl.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/2023-03/ADL-2022-Audit-of-Antisemitic-Incidents-2021.pdf>.

PAGE 19

54. National Center for Transgender Equality. “Issues: Anti-Violence.” <https://transequality.org/issues/anti-violence>.
55. The Human Rights Campaign. “Fatal Violence Against the Transgender and Gender Non-Conforming Community in 2022.” <https://www.hrc.org/resources/fatal-violence-against-the-transgender-and-gender-non-conforming-community-in-2022>.



The Leadership
Conference
Education Fund



**1620 L Street NW, Suite 1100
Washington, DC 20036**



(202) 466-3434



@civilrightsorg



@civilandhumanrights



@civilrightsorg



Pod for the Cause

Copyright © 2023
The Leadership Conference
Education Fund
All Rights Reserved