

May 5, 2021

The Honorable Al Muratsuchi
State Capitol
P.O. Box 942849, Room 2179
Sacramento, CA 94249-0066

RE: AB-557 (Muratsuchi) Hate crimes: hotline
AAP-CA Position: SUPPORT

Dear Assemblymember Muratsuchi,

The American Academy of Pediatrics, California (AAP-CA) representing over 3,000 pediatrician members strongly supports AB 557, as revised on April 21, 2021, which would create a toll-free telephone hotline and online reporting system for the reporting of hate crimes.

Existing law defines “hate crime” as a criminal act committed, in whole or in part, because of actual or perceived characteristics of the victim, including, among other things, race, religion, disability, and sexual orientation. Asian Americans have always been targets of hate crimes, however the number of hate crimes against Asian Americans rose nearly 150% in 2020, according to a new study by the Center for the Study of Hate and Extremism¹.

Hate crime statistics are usually compiled from crimes reported to police. However, hate crimes are chronically under-reported. According to the Department of Justice, 90% of hate crimes involve a violent crime, and approximately 54% go unreported.² Having a toll-free telephone hotline and online reporting system for the reporting of hate crimes will make reporting easier and more frequent. Having accurate numbers is important because these numbers tell state and federal agencies where and how to allocate resources. The numbers also play a vital role in helping all of us, in and outside of government, to develop a better understanding of what is happening in our communities and how to address it to create a state that is safe for all.

AB 557 would create a reporting system for hate crimes in California so we can better address these issues. AAP-CA strongly supports AB 557. Thank you for your public service and leadership on behalf of the health and wellbeing of children, youth, and families in California.

Sincerely,



Jacques Corriveau, MD FAAP
Chair, State Government Affairs Committee
American Academy of Pediatrics, California

cc: AAP Leadership

¹ <https://www.csusb.edu/sites/default/files/FACT%20SHEET-%20Anti-Asian%20Hate%202020%203.2.21.pdf>

² <https://www.csusb.edu/sites/default/files/FACT%20SHEET-%20Anti-Asian%20Hate%202020%203.2.21.pdf>