



March 10, 2020

Assemblymember Reginald Byron Jones-Sawyer Sr.  
Committee on Public Safety  
1020 N Street, Room 111  
Sacramento, California 95814

**Re: Assembly Bill 2236 (Gabriel) - Support**

Dear Chair Jones-Sawyer,

The Hindu American Foundation (HAF) is proud to support Assembly Bill 2236 (Gabriel), which will require peace officers to undergo comprehensive training on hate crimes. The bill specifically requires peace officers to watch the Commission of Peace Officer Standards and Training's (POST) most current hate crime training video as part of their basic training. It also requires all in-service peace officers to take a refresher course on hate crimes every three years that will be developed by POST.

In a 2018 report from the California State Auditor, an audit of four major law enforcement agencies showed that the surveyed agencies have not adequately identified, reported or responded to hate crimes. For instance, the audit found that the four surveyed law enforcement agencies failed to report a total of 97 hate crimes to the Department of Justice (DOJ), or 14 percent of the hate crimes identified. The report noted that the agencies would be better prepared to identify hate crimes by providing their officers with periodic refresher hate crime training. It is critical that our peace officers are appropriately and periodically trained to identify, report and respond to these crimes in order to keep our communities safe.

HAF is a non-profit advocacy organization for the Hindu American community. Founded in 2003, HAF's work impacts a range of issues — from the portrayal of Hinduism in K-12 textbooks to civil and human rights to immigration reform and hate crimes. We have worked closely with the Department of Justice, law enforcement, and legislators in California and across the country to track and address bias motivated attacks on the Hindu and Indian American communities.

Hate crimes against Hindus in the U.S. have rapidly increased in the past several years, and the number of Hindu victims of violent attacks, temple desecration, vandalism, and arson have increased since 2015, according to FBI statistics. Most recently, a Hindu family was targeted in Sunnyvale last year, leaving their young daughter in a coma. Many more incidents have not been accurately documented by law enforcement.



Other communities have similarly faced a growing number of hate crimes. The Center for the Study of Hate and Extremism at California State University, San Bernardino, in a 2018 study showed a steady rise of hate crimes in California's largest cities in the last four years. This has been supported by the findings of a number of civil rights groups and law enforcement agencies.

Accordingly, by providing increased and comprehensive training on hate crimes, AB 2236 will help provide a more complete picture of the extent of hate crimes faced by all communities, including Hindu Americans, in California and enable our organizations to better educate and protect the communities we serve.

For these reasons, the Hindu American Foundation is pleased to support AB 2236.

For more information about the Hindu American Foundation's support of AB 2236, please contact Samir Kalra, Esq., Managing Director, at [samir@hafsite.org](mailto:samir@hafsite.org) or 408.464.8715.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Samir Kalra', written in a cursive style.

Samir Kalra, Esq.  
Managing Director  
Hindu American Foundation

CC: The Honorable Jesse Gabriel, Member of the State Assembly