URGE YOUR SENATORS AND REPRESENTATIVE TO ENDORSE AND SUPPORT
THE NATIONAL OPPOSITION TO HATE, ASSAULT AND THREATS TO
EQUALITY ACT (THE “NO HATE” ACT) OF 2017 (S. 662 / H.R. 1566)

THE ISSUE:
President Barack Obama signed the NAACP-strongly-supported Matthew Shepard, James Byrd Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act into law in December, 2009. This law significantly expanded the role the federal government can play in the investigation and prosecution of hate crimes. The legislation built on the Civil Rights Act of 1968, which permits federal prosecution of anyone who “willingly injures, intimidates or interferes with another person, or attempts to do so, by force because of the other person’s race, color, religion or national origin” or because of the victim’s attempt to engage in one of six types of federally protected activities, such as attending school, patronizing a public place/facility, applying for employment, acting as a juror in a state court or voting.

The Matthew Shepard, James Byrd Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act expanded existing hate crime prevention laws and allowed the federal government to assist local authorities in the investigation and prosecution of crimes motivated by hate, regardless of where or what the victim was doing at the time the crime occurred. It also expanded the definition of a hate crime to include those motivated by the victim’s disability, gender or sexual orientation and it provided grants to states to develop hate crime prevention programs. In short, the Matthew Shepard, James Byrd Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act allows the federal government to work with state and local authorities to prevent or, if necessary, punish hate crimes to the fullest extent possible. As past cases have clearly demonstrated, the federal government is often needed to compliment state and local efforts to investigate and prosecute these very complicated and costly cases.

One of our biggest current problems is the incomplete collection of accurate hate crimes data. The Hate Crime Statistics Act (HCSA), as amended and made permanent in 1996 requires the Attorney General to collect data on crimes committed because of the victim’s race, religion, disability, sexual orientation, or ethnicity. Data must always drive criminal justice policy. The first step in addressing hate violence in America is to know its nature and magnitude. We need State and local jurisdictions to fully report hate crimes activities to the U.S. Justice Department. In 2015, the most current HCSA data available, almost 15,000 law enforcement agencies participated in the HCSA data collection effort – more than ever before. The FBI report documented that hate crimes against African Americans, LGBT community members, Native Americans, Jews, and Muslims all increased in 2015. However, the FBI also documented 87 cities with over 100,000 in population, either affirmatively reported zero (0) hate crimes – or did not participate in the program at all.

The National Opposition to Hate, Assault and Threats to Equality (No Hate) Act of 2017, (S. 662 introduced by Senator R. Blumenthal, CT, and H.R. 1566 by Congressman Don Beyer, VA), incentivizes and encourages state and local law enforcement agencies to more comprehensively collect and report credible, reliable hate crimes data to the FBI. It also allows a judge, at his or her discretion, to sentence an individual convicted of perpetrating a hate crime to undergo a period of supervised release to include community service or education centered on the community targeted by the hate crime.

Lastly, the Department of Justice should also collect data from every federal law enforcement agency. According to press reports, dozens of federal law enforcement agencies are not currently reporting hate crimes to the FBI at all.
**THE ACTION WE NEED YOU TO TAKE:**
Contact your U.S. Senators and Representative and ask them to co-sponsor **THE NATIONAL OPPOSITION TO HATE, ASSAULT, AND THREATS TO EQUALITY (“NO HATE”) ACT OF 2017, S. 662 / H.R. 1566**. To contact your Senators and Representative you should:

- **Make a Phone Call:**
  Call your Senators and your Representative in Washington by dialing the Capitol Switchboard and asking to be transferred to your Senators/Congressman’s offices. The switchboard phone number is **(202) 224-3121** (see message section, below).

- **Write a Letter**
  If you choose to write letters to your Senators, send them to:
  The Honorable (name of Senator)
  U.S. Senate
  Washington, D.C.  20510
  If you choose to write a letter to your Representative, send it to:
  The Honorable (name of Representative)
  U.S. House of Representatives
  Washington, D.C.  20515

- **Send a Fax**
  If you would like to send a fax, call your Senators’ or Representative’s office (through the Capitol switchboard) and ask for their fax numbers (you can use either the attached sample letter or the message box, below).

- **Send an E-Mail**
  To send an e-mail to your Senators, simply go to **www.senate.gov**, click on Senators, then click on Contacting Senators (by name or by state). This selection will also help you to identify who your two senators are.
  To send an e-mail to your Representative, go to **www.house.gov**, and click on “write your representative.” This will help you identify who your Representative is and how to contact him/her.

**PLEASE REMEMBER TO CONTACT BOTH OF YOUR SENATORS!**

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**THE MESSAGE:**

- The first step in addressing hate violence in America is to know its nature and magnitude. We need State and local jurisdictions to fully report hate crimes activities to the U.S. Justice Department.

- The FBI report documented that hate crimes against African Americans, LGBT community members, Native Americans, Jews, and Muslims all increased in 2015. However, the FBI also documented 87 cities with over 100,000 in population, either affirmatively reported zero (0) hate crimes – or did not participate in the program at all.

- The *National Opposition to Hate, Assault and Threats to Equality (“No Hate”) Act of 2017*, incentivize and encourage state and local law enforcement agencies to more comprehensively collect and report credible, reliable hate crimes data to the FBI.

- The US Department of Justice should also collect data from every federal law enforcement agency. According to press reports, dozens of federal law enforcement agencies are not currently reporting hate crimes to the FBI at all.

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**THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION TO THIS IMPORTANT MATTER!!!**
If you have any questions, call Hilary Shelton at the Washington Bureau at (202) 463-2940.

**MEMBERSHIP IS POWER! JOIN THE NAACP TODAY.**
For more information, call your local NAACP branch or visit www.naacp.org
(date)

The Honorable ___________________________
United States Senate / U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20510 / 20515

RE: ENDORSE AND SUPPORT THE NATIONAL OPPOSITION TO HATE, ASSAULT AND THREATS TO EQUALITY (“NO HATE”) ACT OF 2017, S. 622 / H.R. 1566

Dear Senator / Representative ______________________________________;

As your constituent, I am writing to urge you to support and be a co-sponsor of the “National Opposition to Hate, Assault and Threats to Equality (“NO HATE”) Act of 2017”, S. 662, introduced by Sen. Richard Blumenthal, (CT) and H.R. 1566, introduced by Rep. Donald S. Beyer, (VA). This important legislation establishes incentives for state and local law enforcement to submit credible and complete hate crime reports, creates grants for state-run hate crime hot lines, creates a federal private right of action for victims of hate crimes, and allow for judges to require community service or educational programming for individuals convicted under the Mathew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act. It takes concrete steps to put an end to the insidious and discriminatory practice of profiling at the federal, state and local levels based on race, ethnicity, appearance, religious affiliation, sexual orientation or national origin whether real or perceived.

As painfully and more publically discussed in recent weeks, hate crimes are a serious and growing problem in the United States. The increase in the number of hate groups, their membership and hate crimes in the United States, make it clear that more research and complete date is sorely needed. While the latest FBI data demonstrate a 6.8% increase in hate crimes in 2015, dramatic underreporting of hate crimes make it extremely difficult to know the full scope of the problem. At a time when an increase number of Americans face unprecedented threats to their lives and property as a result of many types of bigotry and racism, Congress must do its part to take action to improve hate crime reporting, provide victims with more support and options, and encourage entire communities to come together and heal.

In 2015, the most current Hate Crimes Statistics Act (HCSA) data available, almost 15,000 law enforcement agencies participated in the HCSA data collection effort – more than ever before. The FBI report documented that hate crimes against African Americans, LGBT community members, Native Americans, Jews, and Muslims all increased in 2015. However, the FBI also documented 87 cities with over 100,000 in population, either affirmatively reported zero (0) hate crimes – or did not participate in the program at all. The United States Justice Department be must be able to fully collect hate crimes data if we are to craft a comprehensive solution.

I strongly urge you to become a co-sponsor of The National Opposition to Hate, Assault and Threats to Equality (“NO HATE”) Act of 2017 and help address the very serious problem. Please let me know what you intend to do, and what I can do to help you in this fight. Thank you in advance for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,
(sign and print your name and remember to include your address)