



# COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

## BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

1600 PACIFIC HIGHWAY, ROOM 335, SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA 92101-2470

### AGENDA ITEM

**DATE:** March 14, 2023

**22**

**TO:** Board of Supervisors

#### **SUBJECT**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO DENOUNCING ANTISEMITIC RHETORIC AND HATE CRIMES TOWARDS JEWISH PEOPLE IN SAN DIEGO (DISTRICTS: ALL)**

#### **OVERVIEW**

The County of San Diego is committed to inclusive and accepting communities across our region. Hate crimes against the Jewish community have been on the rise in recent years both locally and nationally. In 2020, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) reported a six percent increase in all hate crimes from the previous year, representing the highest total in 12 years.<sup>1</sup> The FBI also reported that attacks against Jewish people and Jewish institutions made up nearly 60 percent of all religious-based hate crimes. In 2021, the Jewish community in San Diego experienced 38 recorded incidents of antisemitism, including 14 cases of vandalism, 23 incidents of harassment, and one assault.<sup>2</sup>

This troubling local and national trend has been linked to an alarming lack of public knowledge about the history of racism and bigotry against Jewish people. At the same time, there has been a well-documented rise in online hate and the proliferation of Holocaust denial conspiracy theories.<sup>3</sup> San Diego County is taking a proactive stance, including the creation of a Holocaust Remembrance Exhibit on County-owned property this year (January 24, 2023 (1)).

This bigotry can have tragic results. For example, in 2019, an armed gunman opened fire in a San Diego County synagogue during services resulting in one death and multiple injuries. We must do what we can to combat hate to prevent tragedies such as this from occurring ever again.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.adl.org/resources/press-release/adl-deeply-alarmed-2020-fbi-hate-crimes-data-reiterates-calls-increased>

<sup>2</sup> <https://timesofsandiego.com/politics/2022/04/26/report-alarmed-rise-in-antisemitic-incidents-in-san-diego-county-in-2021/>

<sup>3</sup> The Rise of Antisemitism Online During the Pandemic - ISD (isdglobal.org)

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Today's action of passing a resolution denouncing antisemitic rhetoric and hate crimes towards Jewish people would reaffirm the County's commitment to inclusion and acceptance of all, including members of the Jewish community.

**RECOMMENDATION**

**SUPERVISOR TERRA LAWSON-REMER AND SUPERVISOR NATHAN FLETCHER**

Adopt the Resolution entitled: RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO DENOUNCING ANTISEMITIC RHETORIC AND HATE CRIMES TOWARDS JEWISH PEOPLE IN SAN DIEGO COUNTY.

**EQUITY IMPACT STATEMENT**

This resolution underscores the County's commitment to denouncing antisemitic behavior and hate crimes towards Jewish people in San Diego. San Diego County is a diverse region and as such, the Board of Supervisors is committed to creating safe and welcoming environments in every part of this county.

**SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT STATEMENT**

The adoption of today's resolution denouncing antisemitic rhetoric and hate crimes towards Jewish people advances the County's sustainability goals by protecting the health and wellbeing of everyone in the region.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

There is no fiscal impact associated with this action.

**BUSINESS IMPACT STATEMENT**

N/A

**ADVISORY BOARD STATEMENT**

N/A

**BACKGROUND**

San Diego County is home to approximately 400 Holocaust survivors as well as tens of thousands of Jewish people and has a vibrant Jewish community. In recent years, this community has been facing an increase of hate crimes mirroring national trends.

In 2020, the Federal Bureau of Investigation reported a 6 percent increase in hate crimes from the previous year, representing the highest total in 12 years, and found that attacks against Jews or Jewish institutions made up nearly 60 percent of all religious-based hate crimes.<sup>4</sup> In 2021, the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) tabulated 2,717 antisemitic incidents in the United States, a 34 percent increase from the 2,026 incidents tabulated in 2020, and the highest number on record since the

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.adl.org/resources/press-release/adl-deeply-alarmed-2020-fbi-hate-crimes-data-reiterates-calls-increased>

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ADL began tracking incidents in 1979.<sup>5</sup>

This troubling local and national trend has been linked to an alarming lack of public knowledge about the history of racism and bigotry against Jewish people. At the same time, there has been a well-documented rise in online hate and the proliferation of Holocaust denial conspiracy theories.<sup>6</sup> San Diego County is taking a proactive stance, including the creation of a Holocaust Remembrance Exhibit on County-owned property later this year (January 24, 2023 (1)), which has been spearheaded by Supervisor Nathan Fletcher.

This bigotry can have tragic results. For example, in 2019, an armed gunman opened fire in a San Diego County synagogue during services resulting in one death and multiple injuries. We must do what we can to combat hate to prevent tragedies such as this from occurring ever again.

In 2021, the Jewish community in San Diego experienced 38 recorded incidents of antisemitism, including 14 cases of vandalism, 23 incidents of harassment, and one assault.<sup>7</sup> Incidents like these are not just unique to San Diego but can also be seen across our nation. No individual or group within San Diego County should be a target of discrimination, fear retaliation, derision, bullying, isolation, or violence because of their identity.

Today's action of passing a resolution denouncing antisemitic rhetoric and hate crimes reaffirms the County of San Diego's commitment to creating an inclusive environment in our region.

**LINKAGE TO THE COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO STRATEGIC PLAN**

Today's proposed action supports the Community and Justice Strategic Initiatives of the County of San Diego's 2023-2028 Strategic Plan by denouncing antisemitic rhetoric and hate crimes towards Jewish people and affirming the County's commitment to inclusion and acceptance of all San Diego residents.

Respectfully submitted,



TERRA LAWSON-REMER  
Supervisor, District 3



NATHAN FLETCHER  
Supervisor, District 4

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<sup>5</sup> <https://www.adl.org/resources/press-release/adl-audit-finds-antisemitic-incidents-united-states-reached-all-time-high>

<sup>6</sup> The Rise of Antisemitism Online During the Pandemic - ISD (isdglobal.org)

<sup>7</sup> <https://timesofsandiego.com/politics/2022/04/26/report-alarming-rise-in-antisemitic-incidents-in-san-diego-county-in-2021/>

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**ATTACHMENT(S)**

A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO DENOUNCING ANTISEMITIC RHETORIC AND HATE CRIMES TOWARDS JEWISH PEOPLE IN SAN DIEGO COUNTY.