



Chuck Wexler
Executive Director

May 3, 2007

Dear Representative:

On behalf of the Board of Directors and members of the Police Executive Research Forum (PERF), a national organization of law enforcement professionals who serve more than half of the country's population, I am reiterating our support for the *Local Law Enforcement Hate Crime Prevention Act of 2007* (HR 1592). PERF has long endorsed and will continue to support initiatives that enhance the investigation and prosecution of hate crimes. This bill is critical to helping local police effectively address the devastating effects that bias-motivated crimes have on victims and on the communities that are destabilized by the fear and anger that hate crimes generate.

The Local Law Enforcement Hate Crime Prevention Act would authorize the federal government to provide much-needed assistance to state and local law enforcement agencies for the investigation and prosecution of bias-motivated crimes. This legislation also authorizes the Attorney General to make assistance grants available to state and local law enforcement officials for the extraordinary expenses associated with the investigation and prosecution of hate crimes.

In the past, PERF has opposed efforts to expand the federal government's authority over traditionally local crimes. However, given the unusual nature of hate crimes and the substantial gaps in state laws, PERF supports a significant federal role in combating hate crimes. While we maintain that state and local law enforcement has primary responsibility in these cases, PERF also recognizes that there are times when local authorities lack the capacity, resources, expertise or jurisdiction to fully investigate certain hate crimes. Violence motivated by the race, color, religion, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, or disability of the victim does not recognize state boundaries. Because of the serious nature of this national problem, state and local authorities warrant federal assistance. This legislation helps to ensure that our state and local law enforcement personnel have the assistance they need to effectively combat hate crimes. We urge that you vote for the Local Law Enforcement Hate Crimes Prevention Act, to oppose any weakening amendments, and to defeat any motion to recommit this essential legislation.

We thank you for your continued attention to the needs of the law enforcement community. Please feel free to contact me, or our legislative affairs staff, with any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

Chuck Wexler
Executive Director

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cc: **PERF Board of Directors**

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Chief Rick Myers, Colorado Springs Police Department
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