



# Local Law Enforcement Hate Crime Prevention Act of 2007

## LAW ENFORCEMENT SUPPORT FOR THIS LEGISLATION

This measure has repeatedly attracted majority, bipartisan support in both the House and the Senate:

- **House of Representatives** In the 110<sup>th</sup> Congress, the House of Representatives approved HR 1592, the Local Law Enforcement Hate Crime Prevention Act, by a vote of [237-180](#) on May 3, 2007.
- **Senate** In the 110<sup>th</sup> Congress, the bill is S1105, the Matthew Shepard Local Law Enforcement Hate Crimes Prevention Act. The full Senate last voted on this legislation in the 108th Congress. The Senate approved the measure on June 15, 2004, as an amendment to the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2005 (S. 2400) [by a vote of 65-33](#). In September, 2004, the House approved a Motion to Instruct its conferees to retain this provision in conference by a vote of 213-186. Unfortunately, the House Republican leadership acted to strip this language in conference.

The measure also enjoys the support of over 280 civil rights, professional, civic, and religious groups, 26 state Attorneys General, former Attorney General Dick Thornburgh, and a number of the most important national law enforcement organizations, including:

- Federal Law Enforcement Officers Association
- Hispanic American Police Command Officers Association
- Hispanic National Law Enforcement Association
- International Association of Chiefs of Police
- International Brotherhood of Police Officers
- Major Cities Chiefs Association
- National Asian Peace Officers Association
- National Black Police Association
- National Center for Women & Policing
- National Coalition of Public Safety Officers
- National District Attorneys Association
- National Latino Police Officers Association
- National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives
- National Sheriffs' Association
- Police Executive Research Forum
- Police Foundation

Here's what some of them are saying about the legislation:

### Police Executive Research Forum

*"This bill is critical to helping local law enforcement effectively address the devastating effects that bias-motivated crimes have on its victims and the communities destabilized by the fear and anger they generate...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 believes in a significant federal role in combating hate crimes."*

- Excerpts from letter to Members of Congress from Chuck Wexler, Executive Director, PERF, May 3, 2007

### Major Cities Chiefs

*"The Major Cities Chiefs write to express our support for S. 1105, the Local Law Enforcement Hate Crime Prevention Act (LLEHCPA). Hate crime merits a priority response because of its special impact on victims. These crimes – designed to intimidate whole communities on the basis of personal and immutable characteristics – can spark widespread neighborhood conflicts and damage the fabric of our society, especially in major metropolitan cities across our country."*

- Excerpts from letter to Members of the Senate from Darrel W. Stephens, President of Major Cities Chiefs, April 17, 2007

### **National Sheriffs' Association**

*"The National Sheriffs' Association is the voice of 3,087 elected sheriffs across the country and the largest association of law enforcement professionals in the United States. Given that sheriffs and local authorities are often responsible for the investigation and prosecution of hate crimes, NSA recognizes the importance of legislation that would ensure that each case receives adequate and proper attention....NSA supports the Local Law Enforcement Hate Crime Prevention Act of 2007 and believes that the federalization of hate crime investigation and penalty, as well as the expansion of offenses covered by hate crime law can help ensure that Americans and communities can live and exist free of fear".*

– Excerpts from letter to the Honorable Edward M. Kennedy from Sheriff Ted Kamatchus, President of National Sheriffs' Association.

### **Dick Thornburgh, Former U.S. Attorney General**

*"I would like to express my strong support for the passage of ... the Hate Crimes Prevention Act... From my experiences as a Governor, the Attorney General, and as a parent of a child with a disability, I can attest to the importance of this legislation... Please add my name to the list of supporters for the passage of this important legislation."*

– Excerpts from Letter to the Honorable Orrin G. Hatch, Sept. 29, 1998.

### **International Association of Chiefs of Police**

*"On behalf of the International Association of chiefs of Police (IACP), I am writing to express our strong support for the Local Law Enforcement Hate Crimes Prevention Act....Senate passage of the Local law Enforcement Hate Crimes Prevention Act will greatly assist state, tribal, and local law enforcement agencies in investigating and prosecuting hate crimes."*

-Excerpts from letter to The Honorable Edward M. Kennedy from Joseph C. Carter, IACP President, Boston, Massachusetts, June 6, 2007

### **Albany County Sheriff's Department**

*"As you know, last week saw the conclusion of the trial of Aaron McKinney for the murder of Matthew Shepard, a case on which we worked day and night for the last year... We believe justice was served in this case, but not without cost. We have been devastated financially, due to expenses incurred in bringing Matthew's killers to justice. We respectfully urge you to do everything you can to give law enforcement the tools it needs to fight crime in this country."*

– Excerpts from letter to House Speaker Dennis Hastert from Sheriff James Pond and Detective Sergeant Robert DeBree, Albany County Sheriff's Department, Nov. 11, 1999.

### **Eric Holder, Former U.S. Deputy Attorney General**

*"The enactment of H.R. 1082 [bill number for Hate Crimes Prevention Act, 106th Congress] would significantly increase the ability of state and federal law enforcement agencies to work together to solve and prevent a wide range of violent crimes committed because of bias based on the race, color, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, gender, or disability of the victim. This bill is a thoughtful, measured response to a critical problem facing our Nation."*

– Excerpts from testimony before the House Judiciary Committee hearing on hate crimes, Aug. 4, 1999.

### **Jeanine Pirro, District Attorney from Westchester County, N.Y.**

*"The vast majority of criminal prosecutions are brought by local prosecutors... That is the way it should remain... However, there are times when states are unable or unwilling to recognize and address fundamental issues vital to our society. And, when that time comes, the federal government must act."*

*Hate crime is a civil rights issue, and the proper role of the federal government in controlling this menace should mirror federal action in other areas of civil rights... I maintain hope that immediate federal action on this pressing issue will encourage states ... to enact legislation of their own..."*

– Excerpts from testimony before the Senate Judiciary Committee, May 11, 1999.

### **Laramie, Wyoming, Police Department**

*"When it comes to the families of hate crime victims, Congress needs to also be able to look these people in the eyes and say it is doing all it can. In all honesty, right now they cannot say this. There is much more they can do to assist us in helping these families – if they can only find the political will to do so... Yes, justice was served in the end during the Shepard investigation. But the Albany County Sheriff's office had to furlough five investigators because of soaring costs. If the Local Law Enforcement Enhancement Act were passed, this would never have happened..."*

– Excerpts from press statement made by Commander David O'Malley, chief investigator in the murder of Matthew Shepard, Sept. 12, 2000.

### **National Association of Attorneys General**

*"We, the undersigned Attorneys General, are writing to express our strong support of Congressional efforts towards the immediate passage of federal hate crimes legislation....Although state and local governments continue to have the primary responsibility for enforcing criminal law, we believe that federal assistance is critical in fighting the invidious effects of hate crimes.... These measures would provide invaluable tools to federal law enforcement to help state and local authorities in their fight against hate crimes. Therefore, we strongly urge the passage of important hate crimes legislation by the 11<sup>th</sup> Congress."*

- Excerpts from a letter signed by 26 State Attorneys Generals to Congressional Leadership,  
April 16, 2007

### **National Center for Women & Policing**

*"...I want to assure you of our support for the Hate Crimes Prevention Act... We realize the significance of this important piece of legislation."*

– Excerpts from letter from Chief Penny Harrington, Director, National Center for Women & Policing, to Elizabeth Birch, Human Rights Campaign, March 23, 2000.

### **National District Attorneys Association**

*"On behalf of the members of the National District Attorneys Association (NDAA), I am writing to express our organization's support of the 'Local Law Enforcement Hate Crimes Prevention Act of 2007'....With local law enforcement and prosecutors investigating and prosecuting approximately 95% of the crimes committed such assistance would certainly provide state and local officials with the necessary tools to address crimes motivated by hate. The National District Attorneys Association supports [the bill] not only because of its proposal to provide additional resources and federal assistance to state and local authorities for the investigation and prosecution of hate crimes but also its recognition of the primacy of state and local jurisdiction over such crimes."*

– Excerpts from letter to The Honorable Edward M. Kennedy, from Thomas J. Charron, Executive Director, April 9, 2007

### **Police Foundation**

*"The Police Foundation urges you to support ... [the] Local Law Enforcement Enhancement Act. Hate crimes are extremely debilitating to individuals, groups, and entire communities, and the prevention, investigation, and prosecution of these crimes present important challenges for local law enforcement... This legislation will be of valuable assistance to state and local agencies..."*

– Excerpts from letter to Members of Congress from Hubert Williams, Chairman of the Board, Police Foundation, July 26, 2004.

**Updated July 2007**