



OFFICE OF THE
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ORANGE COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

TODD SPITZER

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: May 11, 2021

PRESS RELEASE

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District Attorney Spitzer Announces Creation of new Hate Crimes Unit

SANTA ANA, Calif. –The Orange County District Attorney’s Office is proud to announce the creation of its Hate Crimes Unit.

This new unit will be overseen by the office’s Special Prosecutions, an elite unit within the District Attorney’s Office dedicated to seeking justice in the highest profile cases. The Hate Crimes Unit will be dedicated to prosecuting crimes in which the perpetrators acted based on a bias against the victim’s race, color, religion, national origin, actual or perceived sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, or gender.

The newly created unit is staffed by three prosecutors, two investigators, and is supervised by the head of Special Prosecutions.

Since January 2019, the Orange County District Attorney’s Office has prosecuted more than twice the number of hate crimes that compared to the number of hate crimes prosecuted in the previous 25 years by prior administrations.

Anti-Asian hate crimes increased by nearly 150% in 2020 in America’s major cities according to a recent analysis released by the Center for the Study of Hate and Extremism at California State University, San Bernardino.

In addition to prosecuting hate crimes, the Hate Crimes Unit will focus on increased community education as well as training for law enforcement on how to effectively investigate hate crimes so that those cases can be successfully prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law.

Many victims of hate crimes are reluctant to report due to mistrust of law enforcement and language and cultural barriers. Community outreach and education is a critical component to ensuring those who commit hate-motivated crimes are held accountable as well as sending a strong message that hate crimes will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law.

“I have made the prosecution of hate crimes a centerpiece of my administration because of the devastation hate crimes cause to the individual victim as well as the entire community,” said Orange County District Attorney Todd Spitzer. “We cannot change who we are and no one should be targeted and victimized because of who they are, how they look, or who they love. The beauty of Orange County is found in its diversity. Hate will not be tolerated here. By working to educate our communities, better training our law enforcement officers, and sending a strong message to haters that hate-motivated crimes will not be tolerated, we are preventing hate

crimes from ever occurring and when they do occur we are standing up for victims and holding haters accountable.”

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