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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 88

Offered January 12, 2022

Directing the Virginia State Crime Commission to study the increase in hate crimes and bias-motivated acts directed toward Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in the Commonwealth. Report.

Patrons—Subramanyam; Senator: Hashmi

Committee Referral Pending

WHEREAS, during the COVID-19 pandemic, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (AAPI) have seen an increase in bias-motivated incidents, including harassment, property damage, and violent assaults, related to a stigma around the geographic origins of COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, Stop AAPI Hate, a coalition tracking and collecting AAPI hate and discrimination incidents during the pandemic released data that between March 19, 2020, and December 31, 2020, stated that it received more than 2,808 firsthand accounts from 47 states and the District of Columbia of anti-AAPI hate, with 126 of those incidents involving Asian Americans older than 60 years of age; and

WHEREAS, research released by the Center for the Study of Hate and Extremism at California State University, San Bernardino, compared data from the first quarter of 2021 to the same time period in 2020 across 15 major cities and found that hate crimes surged by 169 percent, continuing the increase in such attacks from 2020;

WHEREAS, in addition to the impact on the immediate victim, hate crimes and bias-motivated acts also have a broader impact in communities where Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders may be fearful for their physical safety when going out in public; and

WHEREAS, assessing the increase in such hate crimes and bias-motivated acts directed toward Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders is important in understanding the scope of the issue in order for the General Assembly to put forth appropriate resources toward preventing and addressing such acts; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the Virginia State Crime Commission be directed to study the increase in hate crimes and bias-motivated acts directed toward the Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in the Commonwealth.

In conducting its study, the Virginia State Crime Commission shall investigate and determine the prevalence of hate crimes and bias-motivated acts toward Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in the Commonwealth, assess any increase in such hate crimes and bias-motivated acts since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020, and analyze and recommend any solutions that may address such hate crimes and bias-motivated acts and increase protections for Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in the Commonwealth.

Technical assistance shall be provided to the Virginia State Crime Commission by the Virginia State Police. All agencies of the Commonwealth shall provide assistance to the Virginia State Crime Commission for this study, upon request.

The Virginia State Crime Commission shall complete its meetings by November 30, 2022, and the chairman shall submit to the Division of Legislative Automated Systems an executive summary of its findings and recommendations no later than the first day of the 2023 Regular Session of the General Assembly. The executive summary shall state whether the Virginia State Crime Commission intends to submit to the General Assembly and the Governor a report of its findings and recommendations for publication as a House or Senate document. The executive summary and report shall be submitted as provided in the procedures of the Division of Legislative Automated Systems for the processing of legislative documents and reports and shall be posted on the General Assembly's website.

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