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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 230

Offered January 11, 2023

Prefiled December 23, 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—Bell and Cosgrove; Delegate: Subramanyam

Referred to Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, during the COVID-19 pandemic, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (AAPI) have suffered 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 indicating that between March 19, 2020, and December 31, 2021, it received 10,905 reported incidents of racism and discrimination targeting Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders across the United States, with Virginia reporting the tenth largest number of hate and discrimination incidents; 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 24 major cities and found that hate crimes surged by 189 percent, continuing the increase in such attacks from 2020; and

WHEREAS, in addition to the impact on the immediate victim, hate crimes and bias-motivated acts 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 Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the Virginia State Crime Commission be directed to study the increase in hate crimes and bias-motivated acts directed toward 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 responses and recommendations to 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, 2023, 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 2024 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.

INTRODUCED

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