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Hon. Bill de Blasio  
Mayor, City of New York  
City Hall  
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Corey Johnson  
Speaker, New York City Council  
City Hall  
New York, NY 10007

Dear Mayor de Blasio and Speaker Johnson:

I am writing to urge you to increase funding in the Fiscal Year 2022 budget to combat hate violence in New York City.

As you know, hate crimes, particularly those against Asian American Pacific Islander, Jewish, and Muslim New Yorkers, are on the rise in New York City. In Queens, the problem is particularly acute; though our Borough is only beginning to emerge from pandemic lockdown, we have already seen an alarming increase in such attacks.

While I applaud the steps the de Blasio Administration and the Council have recently taken to combat hate violence, more work needs to be done. In order to stop such violence before it occurs, the City must allocate additional funding to the New York Commission on Human Rights (CCHR), the Mayor's Office for the Prevention of Hate Crimes (OPHC), and other relevant agencies that take a proactive approach to dispelling hate.

Through its Bias Response Team, CCHR can respond to discriminatory harassment—that is, bias acts which do not rise to the level of a hate crime. With additional funding, the Commission can expand this important team and also bolster its education efforts on hate violence via workshops, campaigns, and other programs.

OPHC also has a crucial role in this work. I commend the Administration for committing \$3 million in Community-Based Hate Crime Prevention funding, which was highlighted in the Mayor's FY22 Executive Budget. This program will help bridge the significant gap between the NYPD and at-risk communities that are not comfortable reporting hate crimes to law enforcement. This funding will empower local non-profit organizations with established ties to traditionally marginalized communities to step in and respond to hate crimes and bias, engage in education efforts, and fulfill other needs that law enforcement cannot meet. The City must expand this promising model by committing additional FY22 funding to non-profit organizations

carrying out this vital work—particularly to those in Queens, given the sharp uptick in hate incidents in this borough.

Finally, I call on the City to fund the creation of a central database to allow for information sharing between relevant agencies, including CCHR and OPHC, and law enforcement. This database would help ensure that policy and other decision makers are communicating with one another, thereby better informing the City's ability to address bias crimes.

While there is no quick fix to eliminating hate violence in our City, these measures will do much to reduce such violence and will save lives. I urge you to use the City's resources to build a safer community for all New Yorkers.

Sincerely,



Donovan Richards Jr.  
*President*  
*Borough of Queens*

CC:

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Chair and Commissioner  
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Mayor's Office for the Prevention of Hate Crimes

Hon. Daniel Dromm  
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NYC Council Committee on Finance