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6 NASSAU COUNTY LEGISLATURE

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8 RICHARD NICOLELLO

9 PRESIDING OFFICER

10

11 PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE

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13 LEGISLATOR DENISE FORD

14 CHAIR

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16

17 Theodore Roosevelt Building

18 1550 Franklin Avenue

19 Mineola, New York

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22 April 8 2021

23 10:20 A.M.

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2 A P P E A R A N C E S:

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4 LEGISLATOR DENISE FORD

5 Chair

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7 LEGISLATOR STEVEN RHOADS

8 Vice Chair

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10 LEGISLATOR VINCENT MUSCARELLA

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12 LEGISLATOR JOHN FERRETTI

13

14 LEGISLATOR DELIA DERIGGI-WHITTON

15 Ranking member

16

17 LEGISLATOR SIELA BYNOE

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19 LEGISLATOR DEBRA MULE

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2 LEGISLATOR FORD: We are going to
3 call the public hearing on hate crimes to
4 order. Good morning everybody. Thank you
5 very much for joining us. Today we have a
6 hearing on the Public Safety Committee
7 regarding hate crimes in Nassau County. While
8 it is with the Public Safety, we have members
9 here, but at the request of the presiding
10 officer, that this hearing be open to all of
11 the members of the legislature.

12 So, we have with us Police
13 Commissioner Patrick Ryder and Commissioner of
14 Asian Affairs Farrah Mozawalla. Thank you
15 both for joining us. I'm sorry for the
16 delay. Trying to get everybody together was a
17 little bit more difficult than we thought. I
18 don't know if the presiding officer would like
19 to say anything.

20 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: No. I
21 just want to thank Denise, the chair of the
22 Public Safety Committee, for holding this
23 hearing and doing it so quickly. Obviously we
24 think it's of tremendous importance. We are
25 very happy to be doing it with Commissioner

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2 Ryder and Farrah Mozawalla from the Officer of
3 Asian-American Affairs.

4 I think it helps to focus our
5 attention, the county's attention, on this
6 issue. Understanding that there have been no
7 reported hate crimes against Asians in the
8 county doesn't mean that they're not
9 occurring. In that Asians are feeling the
10 effects of these crimes and are unwilling or
11 unable to come forward at this point. It's
12 important to be proactive and provide the
13 resources that are necessary to address this
14 issue.

15 LEGISLATOR FORD: Thank you very
16 much. Normally we don't read comments that
17 are sent in by the public, but I think that
18 this is something that would pertain to the
19 topic at hand. So before we go to you
20 Commissioner Ryder, I'd like to read a letter
21 that was sent to our presiding officer.

22 I will ask the presiding officer
23 first to lead us in the Pledge of Allegiance.
24 It was a pleasure connecting with you last
25 week at the interfaith vigil where our

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2 daughter joined you and other leaders in our
3 community to speak out against anti-Asian acts
4 of racism, crime and violence. You had shared
5 with me and my husband that there will be a
6 meeting at the executive offices tomorrow
7 regarding this issue. Unfortunately, we will
8 not be able to attend but we wanted to voice
9 our concerns and also express the need for a
10 dedicated investigator of anti-hate crimes in
11 the Nassau County Police Department that is
12 bilingual in either Mandarin Chinese of
13 Korean.

14 We know that there is a lot of fear
15 among the Asian-American community about
16 reporting crimes due to retribution and
17 further attacks. We not only need increased
18 awareness of the rights and protection that
19 can be given to our community members when
20 there is a crime committed, but we also need a
21 culturally sensitive and linguistically
22 appropriate approach to handling crimes of
23 this nature.

24 We think of all the senior citizens
25 who live in Nassau County and speak for them

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2 as their cohort has been targeted in hate
3 crimes around the country.

4 I am currently working with Town
5 Supervisor Judi Bosworth to create signs
6 denouncing anti-Asian hate that will be posted
7 around the Town of North Hempstead. This sign
8 will include other Asian languages, I believe
9 eight thus far, and direct community members
10 to call 911 to report crimes of bias or hate.
11 A dedicated investigator who can then
12 follow-up with these reports will be vital to
13 handling these cases. It is our desire to see
14 a proactive rather than a reactive approach to
15 addressing the rising tide of anti-Asian
16 sentiments that are happening around us.

17 We thank you for your support and
18 standing in solidarity with the Asian-American
19 and Pacific Islander community. As longtime
20 residents of New Hyde Park, we have seen your
21 commitment and dedication to our community as
22 it has changed into demographics throughout
23 the 20 plus years we have lived here. At the
24 same time, there is always work needed to be
25 done to address the evolving issues that

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2 arise. We urge you to speak on our behalf and
3 advocate for our community's specific needs.

4 Hang and Kathy Wong.

5 So, commissioner, this actually is
6 a good segue into you because I know you that
7 tend to be proactive rather than reactive.
8 I'm sure that you probably can help us in
9 promoting this and maybe responding to some of
10 the issues and recommendations that the Wongs
11 have indicated.

12 COMMISSIONER RYDER: Absolutely.
13 Good morning and thank you presiding officer
14 for calling this hearing because it is a
15 concern for all of us. It's not just a
16 concern for the Asian-American community but
17 it's all communities in Nassau County. We
18 have a zero tolerance for hate. We have a
19 zero tolerance for bias. We just went through
20 months of reform. The two biggest parts of
21 the reform that we need to understand as law
22 enforcement is that one, we continue to build
23 our trust in our communities. And two, is
24 that the communities know that they can come
25 to us and report these crimes.

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2 One of the issues is, we've have
3 zero violent crimes related to hate against
4 our Asian community here in Nassau County.
5 That's a good thing. But the bad thing is, I
6 know there are many bias crimes, hate crimes
7 that are not being reported. It's just the
8 nature of the business that we're in. Crime
9 in general, whether it's a gang-on-gang
10 violence or whether it's a hate crime or an
11 anti-Semitic crime down in the Five Towns,
12 people sometimes are afraid to come forward.
13 Especially in our Latino community because
14 they're concerned about immigration.

15 We are in the business of
16 protecting our victims. We give them a
17 voice. We stand by our victims. When a
18 victim is harassed because of their race,
19 religion, ethnicity we are here to protect
20 them. We don't ever ask a victim their
21 immigration status. Whether it's an Asian
22 community whether it's a Latino community. We
23 focus on what the victim's complaint is. We
24 do the investigation and we go out and protect
25 those individuals.

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2 We get more and more minor hate
3 crimes, if you will, that comments that are
4 made to people, off the cuff comments, as we
5 just saw down in the Wantagh community from a
6 young delivery man. Horrible thing to be
7 said. Horrible thing that happened. People
8 came out and voiced their First Amendment, did
9 their exercise and explained their concerns.
10 I think all the sides got it. And in that
11 case, the pizza man, the owner, did the right
12 thing. He fired the kid immediately.

13 And the parents who I've spoken to
14 are doing the right thing in corrective action
15 for their child. That should go across the
16 board. We can't do it alone. We need to have
17 families involved and move away from the
18 Archie Bunker mentality and move us in a
19 direction that's more positive.

20 We are a very diverse, very fluid
21 county here in Nassau County. Changing all
22 the time. And we in the police department
23 we're out there meeting. COVID put everybody
24 on the back burner. But we're still doing our
25 Zoom meetings, we still do it through our CCCs

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2 as we did last night, through the PACK and the
3 CCT and all of the groups that are together,
4 getting the message out. We've got to stop
5 the division and we got to start coming
6 together. That's our biggest concern.

7 So, we will continue to educate.
8 We ask that all of our communities do the
9 same. We will continue to go out and
10 investigate thoroughly and have those
11 opportunities to engage with our community to
12 build that trust. I'm here and happy to
13 answer any questions that we can today.

14 LEGISLATOR FORD: Thank you very
15 much Commissioner. Before we go to questions
16 from the legislators, I would like to ask
17 Commissioner Mozawalla if she would like to
18 say a few words.

19 MS. MOZAWALLA: Good morning.
20 Thank you Presiding Officer Nicoletto. Thank
21 you Legislator Ford. Thank you members of the
22 legislature. I'm the executive director for
23 Nassau County's Office of Asian-American
24 Affairs. Our office works to uplift our
25 Asian-American residents by serving as a

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2 bridge between community and county
3 government. We serve as a resource to our
4 residents, providing crucial information on
5 the range of county services and programs and
6 opportunities in the area of social services,
7 health and mental health services, business
8 development, housing, public safety and much
9 more.

10 Our team is proud of the work we
11 have done to ensure community members feel
12 safe raising concerns and issues with us. And
13 we have become a trusted voice within these
14 communities because we understand the
15 languages and the cultural nuances within the
16 growing Asian community in Nassau County.

17 Our office is fortunate to be
18 supported by an active advisory counsel,
19 chaired by Dr. Isma Chaudhry. The group has
20 offered ongoing advice and input to our staff
21 as we engage in important conversations with
22 our community and how the county can assist.

23 One focus of our discussion and
24 concern has been the anti-Asian,
25 anti-immigrant rhetoric, and more recently,

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2 the spike in violence against Asians. As a
3 trusted messenger in the Asian community, we
4 have partnered with many stakeholders in the
5 county and beyond on outreach to the Asian
6 community, working with county partners
7 hosting informational sessions and simply
8 helping our residents understand the resources
9 that are available to them.

10 In fact, last week our office
11 hosted a vigil with many of you participating
12 in. This vigil is there to condemn hate
13 speech and violence against Asian-Americans
14 and make sure people know it's clear that
15 there is no place for hate in Nassau County.

16 We have built strong relationships
17 with the Nassau County Police Department as
18 well as the Nassau County Human Rights
19 Commission. We will continue to offer our
20 assistance to these offices and to the
21 community to continue to break down any
22 barriers or walls that will stand in the way
23 of reporting incidences and work to create a
24 safer community for all of us. Thank you.

25 LEGISLATOR FORD: Thank you very

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2 much. Before we go to the legislators, I
3 don't know if there's anyone out in the public
4 if they wish to speak or make a comment.
5 Please just state your name and address for
6 the record.

7 MR. CHIANG: My name is David
8 Chiang. I live in Manhasset. I'm here on
9 behalf of the Chinese-American Association of
10 North Hempstead. We're a group of people that
11 work with outreach to our communities and make
12 sure that the communities feel safe. I've
13 been hearing back from a lot of members in our
14 community, especially the ladies, the younger
15 people, the older people, that they don't feel
16 safe going out. They feel like all these
17 things are happening on the TV. They're
18 really worried it could happen to them.

19 A lot of them are talking about
20 getting pepper spray. They're talking about
21 getting self-defense training. So I think
22 it's true, they feel it.

23 There's been reports of
24 aggression. Some people call it
25 micro-aggression. But I wouldn't say it's

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2 micro-aggression. I would say it's
3 macro-aggression because to the average
4 person, to a sane person, it's micro. But to
5 a crazy person this will activate them. The
6 see what happened with this crazy guy in the
7 city. He kicked this lady, 65 a years old,
8 going to church, for no reason. And he was
9 out on parole for murdering his mother.

10 I think the government, I think the
11 educational system has failed us. I think we
12 need to bring more awareness to these issues.
13 We need to make sure that the government has
14 laws in place that protect these vulnerable
15 people. And also keep these people that
16 are -- they should be in jail. They shouldn't
17 be coming out.

18 One of our concerns is that we need
19 to have someone in the police department more
20 dedicated to talking to these people in their
21 own language, who understands their culture.

22 When I was growing up in Brooklyn,
23 my parents always said do good in school.
24 Don't start fights. I had many fights in
25 school. You know why? Because people made

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2 fun of me. Made racial slurs to me. Then I
3 felt like I wasn't backed up by my parents.
4 So, one of the promises I made to myself was,
5 when I have children, if they come home and
6 someone pick on them and called them racial
7 slurs, I would go to the school first thing.
8 So, I felt like I wasn't being protected by my
9 parents and by my school administrators.

10 So I think this is a history of
11 anti-Asian crime that's been overlooked. Has
12 been whitewashed. I think the silent minority
13 will speak up and I'm here to represent them.
14 I think we need to have more voice.

15 Also, if you look at it, the Asian
16 community is growing very quickly in Nassau
17 County but we use zero percent, almost zero
18 percent, of the social services.

19 So, why I'm here is asking is that
20 we should have more dedicated people to help
21 these people feel vulnerable. Our senior, our
22 young and our old. Our vulnerable. Our women
23 especially. They feel really scared. After a
24 year of being locked up at home with COVID,
25 now they're afraid of going out to go

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2 shopping. They have to ask their friends or
3 relatives to accompany them.

4 I know, for instance, in Flushing
5 they have patrols now just to make people feel
6 safe and they can walk the street because
7 there are many incidents in Flushing.

8 I think we're very lucky that we
9 don't have any violent crimes in Nassau. But
10 one of the reasons we moved out here is to
11 make sure that we don't have these kinds of
12 crimes. So, we don't want these
13 micro-aggressions to lead into
14 macro-aggression.

15 I'm here to ask for more resources
16 to help the community get these crimes
17 reported. Thank you very much.

18 LEGISLATOR FORD: Thank you very
19 much. And I think probably a lot of the fear
20 can stem, even though it's not necessarily
21 here in Nassau County as the level that it is
22 in New York City. But I think when we look at
23 it, because it's right next door to us, that
24 with those crimes we're all afraid that it
25 could all of a sudden started trickling and

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2 coming into Nassau County if it's not checked.

3 MR. CHIANG: One more question.

4 I heard that there's a law being passed in
5 Albany that says the victims who report crimes
6 their information will be given to the
7 criminal defense attorney and it might end up
8 with the criminals. I want to ask Mr. Ryder
9 what is the town or in the legislature what is
10 Nassau doing about this? If we report a crime
11 and we say something will our information be
12 disclosed to these criminals?

13 COMMISSIONER RYDER:

14 Unfortunately, that's under the new discovery
15 laws that came out back in January of 2020.
16 So now all of that information does get turned
17 over to defense counsel. Not to the criminal
18 but to his attorney.

19 LEGISLATOR FORD: Even if
20 somebody reports a hate crime?

21 COMMISSIONER RYDER: That's
22 correct.

23 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: I just
24 would point out that last year we created an
25 Office of Crime Victims Advocate. So, the

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2 victims, in addition to having the support of
3 the police department and the district
4 attorney's office, also have crime victims
5 advocates to stand up on their behalf. That's
6 a difficult part of the law that was passed
7 and we were very concerned about it.

8 There's a limit to what we can do
9 here in Nassau but we are trying to put all
10 the resources that we have available into
11 protecting the victims in this case and we've
12 done that with the crime victims advocate.

13 LEGISLATOR RHOADS: If I can just
14 chime in? I was just going to make the
15 suggestion sir as well. This is legislation
16 that passed as part of criminal justice reform
17 last year in the state legislature. We spoke
18 out, many of us spoke out, vocally against
19 that. I would make the suggestion that you
20 contact your state legislators and voice your
21 very legitimate concerns. Because that is one
22 of the most outrageous components, in my
23 opinion, of what they passed last year and it
24 should be revisited.

25 Unfortunately, it may fall on deaf

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2 ears but if we don't make our voices heard
3 then we know there's not going to be change.

4 MR. CHIANG: I think the concern
5 is that a lot of people are not going to
6 report crimes anymore. If the defense
7 attorneys get this kind of information will
8 they hold it in confidence or will they give
9 it to their clients? There should be a rule
10 or law that says if you give it to your
11 client, who is a potential criminal, you have
12 the potential of being disbarred or something
13 like that. That would prevent the defense
14 attorney to release this kind of information
15 to the clients who are potential criminals.

16 I think if we want crimes to go
17 down and we want people to report something
18 when they see something this type of
19 legislation is terrible for law-abiding
20 citizens. Thank you very much.

21 LEGISLATOR FORD: Thank you very
22 much sir. Good morning. Please state your
23 name and address.

24 MR. CHAN: Good morning. My name
25 is Derek Chan. I'm a Roslyn resident. I'm

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2 also the president of the Greater Roslyn
3 Association for Chinese Enrichment. Thanks
4 for holding this hearing today.

5 I guess my comments really revolve
6 around the recent spikes in crime that really
7 kind of brought the anti-Asian hate to the
8 surface, right. It's interesting how when we
9 take a look historically in any type of
10 minority cultures, whether in the
11 African-American or Latin-American
12 communities, that it takes it to get to a
13 certain boiling point before we start to see
14 changes in reform. I think it's lucky that we
15 live in Nassau County and it's also nationally
16 we're not I think fully at that boiling point
17 yet.

18 I think the commissioner makes
19 great points around having very low crimes
20 that are being reported. But I think it's
21 important to also note that, and David
22 mentioned it briefly, that not all crimes
23 are -- it's like these micro-aggressions. I'm
24 born and raised in New York. I'm a diehard
25 Yankee fan. I'm about as American as can.

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2 But there's not probably a month that goes by
3 that I'm not reminded that I am still very
4 Chinese.

5 And things are things -- and it's
6 normal. All of us we take pride in our
7 cultures and we take pride in who we are. Our
8 individuality. That being said, why I bring
9 up I grew up in New York is that one thing
10 that I always loved that I know all cultures.
11 I accept all cultures. My friends are like
12 the United Nations. I'm lucky that I grew up
13 in an area like that. In Nassau County and
14 other areas of the country that's not
15 necessarily the case.

16 So, as we consider how we can
17 address and tackle the issues, it seems that
18 we're all kind of talking about it but to see
19 that consistency around just the education for
20 people, to have mom and dad go back and say
21 that's wrong, you can't do that. The Archie
22 Bunker mentality, which I grew up watching as
23 well and I turn back now and I can't believe
24 we got away with saying half the things that
25 are on that show. But the reality is is that

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2 that kind of creates our perception and our
3 thoughts at this juncture.

4 So, as we consider how to approach
5 the problem, education really becomes
6 paramount. As we think about things that we
7 do in Nassau County to really perhaps
8 incorporate more culture events or culture
9 kind of exposures to people in acceptance to
10 kind of show that there's a bridge. That's a
11 way of trying to prevent things from getting
12 to a boiling point. Because as it stands
13 right now, we're lucky that we're not at that
14 point. But if we take a look even at
15 Manhattan, in a city that's so diverse, to
16 kind of see the types of incidents that I have
17 not seen in my 40 plus years -- I'm not going
18 to age myself completely -- but really I want
19 Nassau County to be better than that and I
20 seek your help to kind of make sure that
21 that's the case.

22 LEGISLATOR FORD: Thank you very
23 much for your comments. Well noted. Very
24 well spoken. Are there any other speakers?
25 Then we will go to the legislators and I will

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2 ask our presiding officer.

3 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: I do have
4 a few questions. Commissioner, the suggestion
5 has been made of a dedicated investigator, for
6 want of a better term, who is conversant in
7 Mandarin, some of the various dialects, as
8 well as perhaps Korean. Does the police
9 department have those resources? And if not,
10 can we consider doing that? Again, I think
11 the issue has been mentioned people are
12 concerned about coming forward but I think if
13 there's someone speaking their own language I
14 think they would be more interested and feel
15 safer in doing so.

16 COMMISSIONER RYDER: It's always
17 a struggle when we get into the multiple
18 languages. That's why we went with the
19 language line. But you can't use language
20 line when you're addressing a victim of a
21 certain crime. You really need that personal
22 element involved. We then, when it raises to
23 that level that the investigation starts, we
24 have three members that speak Cantonese and
25 there are many different dialects in the Asian

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2 community. But we bring in those speakers
3 then to address the victim.

4 The victim of that crime -- we will
5 then bring in the person that we need to speak
6 that language. Unfortunately we don't have
7 them available all the time, so we end up
8 relying on language line.

9 The dedication of the
10 investigations though go through the detective
11 division. And now, because of reform, we have
12 a dedicated bias coordinator in each precinct,
13 the deputy commanding officer, and he reports
14 directly to the chief of department to let him
15 know that there's crimes and these are
16 patterns that are occurring and the
17 investigator does the other side of it.

18 But again, we will always bring in,
19 depending on the type of crime it is, someone
20 that can speak that language if available.

21 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: You've
22 done an excellent job over the years since
23 you've been here in terms of outreach. You've
24 gone into every community. You make yourself
25 available and we really appreciate that. Is

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2 there a way that we can better communicate to
3 the Asian-American population and other
4 populations the resources that are available
5 to them in the police department?

6 COMMISSIONER RYDER: Yes,
7 absolutely. Farrah and I spoke just the other
8 day regarding they wanted some defensive
9 tactic training. We're not in the business of
10 doing defensive tactic training. But we are
11 in the business of educating those on how they
12 can protect themselves. We're working out
13 some training that's going to go up into the
14 North Shore area where we have our largest
15 Asian community where we are can avail them
16 that opportunity to learn and educate.

17 A lot of this is about education.
18 It's a lot about awareness as you just heard.
19 Knowing what your rights are. Knowing what
20 the police department can do for you and
21 knowing what services the county provides.

22 So, this is going to be not just
23 about this is how you handle that when it
24 comes upon you, it's going to be about what
25 the education is and stuff about reporting.

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2 So, we are moving in that direction after
3 having that conversation the other day.

4 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: Farrah, I
5 just have one follow-up. That was a great
6 idea that the constituent indicated that
7 working with the Town of North Hempstead to
8 post signs in multiple languages indicating
9 that if you were the victim of a crime, you
10 see a crime to call 911. Can the county
11 undertake a program like that? To do
12 something similar?

13 MS. MOZAWALLA: Absolutely can
14 visit that idea. It sounds like a great
15 idea. I do want to address languages. The
16 Asian is so diverse and there's multiple
17 languages. If you look at the attack in
18 California that was a Philippine victim. He
19 spoke Tangla. If you look at the attacks with
20 the victims of the Atlanta shooting they spoke
21 Mandarin. If you look at the cab driver who
22 got killed in DC, Mohammed Anwar, he spoke
23 Urdu and Hindi. So, there's so many different
24 languages and I do want to make that clear
25 that it's not just Mandarin. You would have

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2 to look at Korean. You would have to look at
3 Tangla. You would have to look at Urdu,
4 Punjabi, Hindi. You have to make sure you
5 address all of those languages.

6 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: Right. It
7 can be a difficult task but, as we all know,
8 the county is becoming more and more diverse,
9 which is a wonderful thing. We do need to put
10 the resources into it to making sure that
11 every one of the groups, regardless of what
12 language an individual speaks, will know that
13 when they come forward to the police
14 authorities or to Human Rights Commission or
15 whatever it is that there will be someone
16 speaking their language or we will get the
17 resources to communicate with them.

18 LEGISLATOR FORD: Just speaking
19 about the language access. And I know with
20 the police reform that that was something that
21 we are accessing more so. How easy is it for
22 us to reach out to those people? Is it almost
23 immediate? Like if we end up -- a police
24 officer does come up to somebody who does
25 speak Mandarin and the officer does not and

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2 there's a communication, like maybe they're
3 going try to report a crime or something
4 happened to them while they're on the street,
5 how is it that the officer would be able to
6 then be able to reach somebody who would be
7 able to speak Mandarin and to communicate
8 better?

9 MS. MOZAWALLA: So one of the
10 things that we did very early on, every single
11 police car now has an iPhone in it. So I'm
12 not asking the officer to use his own phone.
13 Every police ambulance has an iPhone. Every
14 investigator has an iPhone and every
15 supervisor has an iPhone. So the phones are
16 out there. Every phone has the app on it.
17 Within seconds -- if I did it in here it
18 probably wouldn't work -- but within seconds
19 of me pressing the app I connect and I say I
20 have a language and I'm looking for this type
21 of language. They will connect me to that
22 person and within a minute to two minutes we
23 are communicating back through the third party
24 translator.

25 LEGISLATOR FORD: That will help

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2 especially when they're out on the street
3 rather than just calling it.

4 COMMISSIONER RYDER: And it's
5 also in our 911 system and they're the largest
6 user of language line is the 911
7 communicators. And also it's at every
8 precinct station house.

9 LEGISLATOR FORD: I know that
10 some of the fears that were expressed in
11 regard to especially the elderly, finally they
12 can get out after a year of being in their
13 homes and now they're faced with the
14 possibility of being victimized in crimes.
15 Just even to walk down their streets to go
16 shopping locally or whatever. Are there any
17 other efforts that we can do to help ease
18 their fear? I don't know whether or not -- I
19 wish we had beat cops still -- to be able to
20 help them so that maybe they don't have to
21 carry pepper spray but maybe there are some
22 other things that they can do to keep
23 themselves protected?

24 COMMISSIONER RYDER: Yeah.
25 That's one of the things that we're going to

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2 work with them on in the next couple of weeks
3 going forward is that education awareness, how
4 to make complaints. But on top of it how to
5 defend yourself. And look, I'm going to tell
6 everybody right here, your defense is, give
7 them what they want, let them go and go home.
8 Then you call us. I don't want anybody taking
9 on that individual.

10 But in some instances you don't
11 have an option. Like the woman that was going
12 to work and got her head kicked in in
13 Flushing. That's where we have to sometimes
14 have to show different ways that they can
15 defend themselves. Retreat is an option.
16 It's always an option. Not for me in law
17 enforcement but it is for that civilian. Get
18 that protection, get cover, and get out from
19 the environment.

20 People stepping forward and doing
21 the right thing. As you saw the doorman that
22 did not help the other individual there in the
23 city. We're in a, unfortunately, a world
24 right now that everybody is taking a step back
25 and nobody wants to help. That makes it

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2 harder for law enforcement especially when law
3 enforcement becomes the target of a lot of
4 that aggression.

5 So, as we're speaking here, I
6 started to think of something that an old
7 instructor from HYDA taught me a long time
8 ago, and we do it through the intelligence
9 world, is having these points of light. Maybe
10 we can make up points of light in each
11 community working with the community,
12 identifying those that hey, I got a victim who
13 is afraid to come to me but you can go to this
14 point of light in your community and they know
15 me comfortable enough to reach out to me.
16 Then that also helps me with the translation
17 issue that I'm going to have.

18 Again, we'll develop something like
19 that. We'll map it out. We'll do it from an
20 intelligence-led policing style and then we'll
21 have those points of light throughout the
22 community.

23 LEGISLATOR FORD: I sort of like
24 that idea because I think that when we talk
25 about if they feel that if they report a crime

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2 they could all of a sudden the person who
3 committed crime against them will have their
4 information because the defense attorney with
5 this new state law. So, perhaps maybe by
6 utilizing a point of light that person could
7 still remain anonymous and if there are crimes
8 being committed that maybe they can be
9 protected from giving their information over
10 to a defense attorney who may give their
11 personal information.

12 And I think that also my fear with
13 this new law, this state law, where they have
14 to divulge everything even when you're a
15 witness to something your personal information
16 goes to the defense attorney as well. So,
17 we're creating, I guess, and we have to
18 overcome this environment, where people will
19 be afraid to report something because then all
20 of a sudden their information now is given
21 over to the criminal.

22 COMMISSIONER RYDER: We've worked
23 with the DA's office and special victims that
24 we can, it delays the process, but we create a
25 generic email. It's only so that person can

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2 contact. You have to know who your accuser
3 is, right? But we set up a generic email that
4 if there's a reach they can reach through that
5 generic email. Which, again, the district
6 attorney has worked very closely with us in
7 trying to do that. But, unfortunately, at the
8 end of the day they're going to get that
9 information. It doesn't protect our victims
10 as it should.

11 LEGISLATOR FORD: Farrah, I think
12 also with us we all a need to, I guess, become
13 more involved because I don't think we need to
14 have a boiling point reached here in Nassau
15 County. And I'd like to see if we can help
16 defuse a lot before anything happens and maybe
17 become a model for other communities as well
18 so that we can help reduce the hate crimes.

19 I think that even in communities
20 that do not have a large Asian population I
21 think that our education and our awareness has
22 to be heightened as well so that -- because it
23 is ignorance a lot of times. When people say
24 just because you look different than me
25 doesn't make mean that you're really not

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2 American. We're all Americans. I think that
3 this is where we need to start really
4 overcoming a lot of that and start
5 demonstrating to everybody that it doesn't
6 matter the color of the hair, skin, eyes or
7 whatever. What matters is we are Americans
8 and that we have to recognize we have to treat
9 everybody with great respect.

10 So, we need to work more closely
11 and we'll get this message out and demonstrate
12 whatever way that we can. Because I really
13 think that everybody should feel safe and know
14 that they are safe here in Nassau County.

15 I'm going to ask Legislator Bynoe.

16 LEGISLATOR BYNOE: Thank you
17 Madam Chairwoman. Thank you for putting
18 together this hearing. It's very, very timely
19 and important that we discuss these issues.
20 So, thank you.

21 I'd like to mention that Arnold
22 Drucker and Debra Mule are on remotely. They
23 asked to be acknowledged.

24 So, Commissioner, just to the
25 question regarding utilizing the third party,

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2 like maybe a church or a safe haven I was
3 going to address that. I think it's an
4 important linkage into the community because
5 people will feel safer going to this space and
6 having this discussion. But would it insulate
7 them from having --

8 COMMISSIONER RYDER: No.

9 Unfortunately their information -- again,
10 you're the victim. Probably the most
11 horrendous is when you have a sex crime victim
12 that information gets turned over. The law
13 that came out.

14 LEGISLATOR BYNOE: I absolutely
15 support the idea, because I was going to bring
16 that up that the presiding officer mentioned,
17 about the county taking on some level of a
18 campaign and really making this a county -- we
19 know that there's a large Asian-American
20 community in North Hempstead and I applaud
21 North Hempstead. But this is a countywide
22 issue and we need to address it. We have
23 business owners and the like that are here and
24 need our support countywide.

25 So, this is not really directed to

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2 either one of you, but I think the county
3 administration in terms of the crimes victim
4 department that we have we definitely are
5 going to need some culturally competent folks
6 in that department as well. Language access
7 will always be an issue because of the number
8 of languages. But cultural competency, you
9 know, people understanding how to interface
10 with the different ethnicities that have to
11 report those kinds of crimes I think is
12 essential. So I think it would behoove to
13 inquire about the diversity of that
14 department. I think it's important to support
15 what's happening at the police department.
16 So, those are my only points I'm making this
17 morning.

18 LEGISLATOR FORD: Excellent
19 recommendation. Definitely. I just want to
20 note that Legislators Muscarella, Kennedy and
21 Ferretti are also on remote. They're here
22 with us at this hearing. Legislator
23 Schaefer.

24 LEGISLATOR SCHAEFER: Good
25 morning. I feel like we're just hitting the

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2 same two topics but they're a big part of the
3 hate crime hearing that we're having today and
4 one of them is on the bail reform that was
5 mentioned earlier. Just something that struck
6 me. Let's not forget that defendants can
7 represent themselves. So, when you're
8 thinking, I think Mr. Chiang brought it up,
9 when you're thinking that it's just going to
10 be the attorney that might get that
11 information, that, quote unquote, attorney or
12 the representative might be the actual
13 defendant who's going to get that information
14 because he doesn't have an attorney. Unless
15 there's a nuance in the law that I don't know
16 about.

17 COMMISSIONER RYDER: My
18 understanding is they do get the information.

19 LEGISLATOR SCHAEFER: Regardless
20 of who it is?

21 COMMISSIONER RYDER: We try to
22 protect as much as we can. But at the request
23 and when it does come to the 45-day period
24 that data must be turned over.

25 LEGISLATOR SCHAEFER: That's

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2 unfortunate as well. I think we all can agree
3 we don't like this law.

4 Then just really I was wondering,
5 Commissioner Mozawalla, on the education piece
6 of it. I'm sorry, I'm thinking about it now
7 that we're having this discussion, I'm sorry
8 that we don't have members of the education
9 community here as well as I think mental
10 health because I think everyone working
11 together and to the extent they may already be
12 doing things in schools, but I think that's
13 really an important piece of it is teaching
14 anti-bias training and just about all of this
15 and what they see on TV. Because kids are
16 seeing these things on TV and what it means
17 and what's wrong with it.

18 To the extent that you, along with
19 us, I think we all agree we're happy to be
20 involved in making an awareness campaign and
21 getting more education out there. I think we
22 should include those two communities.
23 Obviously the education community, the
24 schools. But also I think mental health is a
25 big piece of it.

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2 Because I'm sure that's -- listen,
3 that person that commits that crime
4 something's not right. Something's going on
5 and that needs to be addressed and I'm sure
6 the mental health community those are the
7 people that are going to be addressing it or
8 should be. Maybe that's needs to be a bigger
9 component of what they discussed. But we can
10 all get together and figure those things out.

11 I'd love it if that's part of what
12 you look to move forward in your campaign.

13 MS. MOZAWALLA: Absolutely. I
14 definitely will. We need to make sure that
15 the main thing is to create awareness and also
16 educate the community in knowing -- the Asian
17 community stereotypically, historically is a
18 community that doesn't like to rock the boat.
19 They like to stay in silos. They don't want
20 to make too much noise. I think that's what
21 many immigrant communities they come from
22 cultures where sometimes the government is
23 oppressive. So, when they come to America
24 they don't realize the support that they can
25 get. So we have to change the culture of our

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2 own communities also.

3 In response to David, I did want to
4 say that our office works with the crime
5 victim advocacy unit, not so much for hate
6 crimes but for domestic abuse cases. We've
7 had a lot of uptick in domestic abuse cases
8 where the Asian-American women, females,
9 during this pandemic and we've been working
10 closely with them to address the needs and
11 concerns of these women.

12 LEGISLATOR SCHAEFER: Great. I
13 think the conversation is that uncomfortable
14 conversation we've been all talking about or
15 hearing about are the things we've been
16 discussing the last year pretty much and it's
17 just going to continue but I think it's the
18 only way to really get to change. Thanks.

19 LEGISLATOR FORD: Legislator
20 Mule. She's remote.

21 LEGISLATOR MULE: I am. Thank
22 you. I too want to thank Denise for putting
23 this meeting together. I think it's very
24 timely. And as the presiding officer said,
25 we're kind of doing this proactively because

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2 we don't have a record of anti-Asian hate
3 crimes in the county. Of course that's not
4 necessarily true for other ethnicities and
5 minorities.

6 My question is to Commissioner
7 Ryder. Do you have statistics for us on
8 exactly what we're talking about in terms of
9 hate crimes for various different
10 communities?

11 COMMISSIONER RYDER: Not broken
12 down by community. I brought it by county.
13 If you look at 2021 year-to-date there were
14 seven anti-Semitic, five with swastikas, two
15 were aggregated harassment. Two anti-Black
16 cases. One was graffiti, one was menacing.
17 Zero anti-Hispanic. Two anti-Asian. One was
18 no crime. It was a sticker on a car. The
19 other was graffiti. Then six were anti-sexual
20 orientation type cases. Two assaults, two
21 aggravated harassment, one criminal mischief.
22 And anti-Islamic zero and anti-Christian zero.

23 LEGISLATOR MULE: Thank you. I
24 think it's important for us to -- it's been
25 said already -- but to remember that crimes

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2 such as these are not necessarily reported
3 because of fear. I find that zero
4 anti-Hispanic statistic quite shocking. I'm
5 certain that that is not reflective of
6 reality. It's the reality that we have in
7 terms of what's been reported to police but
8 I'm certain that there are anti-Hispanic
9 crimes going on.

10 One of the last statistics that you
11 mentioned commissioner was about crimes
12 against the LGBTQ community and I think it's
13 very important to remember that we also have
14 that community that we need to protect. So,
15 thank you. I'm done.

16 LEGISLATOR FORD: Legislator
17 Walker.

18 LEGISLATOR WALKER: Thank you
19 Legislator Ford, and I too want to thank our
20 presiding officer and Legislator Ford for
21 putting this together and certainly for you
22 both being here today. And David and Derrick
23 thank you so much for coming and speaking out
24 also.

25 I represent the 17th Legislative

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2 District. My hometown is Hicksville and
3 Hicksville has a very, very diverse
4 community. Maybe one of the most diverse
5 communities in Nassau County. We've faced
6 many issues over the last number of years.
7 Certainly not necessarily hate crimes but just
8 in how people can treat each other and all of
9 us trying to work together and understand each
10 other's cultures and bringing us more and more
11 together.

12 I would say if there were hate
13 crimes they involved swastikas painted in a
14 park or someplace and certainly those were
15 addressed and they found out who did this,
16 committed this crime, then it was dealt with.

17 But it does concern me too, as
18 David and Derrick spoke, that even if people
19 are afraid, that feeling of being afraid and
20 you might not voice it but -- and whether
21 they're happening here or not it becomes that
22 conception in your mind that like Oh, my God
23 this could happen if I go out or this could
24 happen. If I'm in a store or whatever.
25 Especially now that the things are opening up

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2 more and we do want people to get out.

3 Summer's coming and hopefully we can enjoy all
4 that time together.

5 Maybe we can do things too.

6 Especially I know in the Asian communities
7 church is big thing. I have many Asians right
8 in my neighborhood and I always think to
9 myself God bless their little children because
10 they spend so much time on a Sunday in
11 church. My little grandchildren would
12 probably be saying when are we leaving? Yet
13 they spend a long time there. I know it's
14 social too and it becomes fun for them or
15 becoming fun for them.

16 But perhaps meeting with our groups
17 and speaking and getting even our officers and
18 different community groups to be more familiar
19 with them and them to be more familiar with
20 us. Because as we do that we become like
21 friends. We become more like family. And
22 they're not so afraid to reach out.

23 And again, you spoke about, I'll
24 say the terminology wrong, but that person of
25 light that you got to that person to share

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2 your concerns and complaints to and that
3 person could reach out to our police
4 commissioner, to one of our departments or to
5 anybody and try to get some help and address
6 it.

7 So, I mean, I think we are very
8 blessed in that we haven't had more outright
9 hate crimes. However, there are issues that
10 we do have to address.

11 And I actually spoke to Legislator
12 Ford about this earlier. I think too
13 educating all of us in just some of the like
14 the rules and etiquette that people follow. I
15 know there's a lot more little churches or
16 mosques or whatever, they pop up here, there
17 and they kind of pop up in neighborhoods and
18 whatever. They have a service and then
19 there's cars are all over the place and
20 whatever and they're parking in front of
21 people's driveways, parking on people's lawns
22 or whatever. Even addressing them with our
23 neighbors and with those holding those little
24 events because they sometimes create a problem
25 that didn't really need to exist.

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2 Then I know there was an issue in
3 my neighborhood where there was something on
4 Old Country Road in a residential area.
5 People's driveways were blocked and sidewalks
6 were blocked and cars were on their grass and
7 then someone went into the little mosque or
8 little center and then they went in with their
9 shows on and then that was an issue. It
10 didn't have to happen. I think we all have to
11 work together and educate each other.

12 Like we said, it starts in the
13 school. I know it's been hard because you
14 can't always get into the schools. My school
15 district really doesn't allow anybody in.
16 Commissioner Ryder and I have read virtually
17 to them. Yet in other places you're allowed
18 to go.

19 But educating our young people, our
20 adults, different community groups, we all
21 need to work together. We live in this world
22 together and together we can do a lot of
23 wonderful things. But if we're at odds with
24 each other it just doesn't happen. I
25 certainly see a lot of progress in my

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2 community where people have now settled in and
3 they feel more at home and they're working
4 together. Our schools, our kids work
5 together.

6 I laugh when they have twins day or
7 matching day or whatever and my grandchildren
8 are twins. They don't look anything like each
9 other but the kids think that look like each
10 other because they have the same color eyes or
11 the same color hair and they wear the same
12 shirt that day and they're twinsy. And you
13 just have to love it because they see things
14 very differently than we do. I think if we
15 can keep that moving forward we can help all
16 of our communities and it's the adults.

17 And, sadly to say, people who are
18 bad are bad. And the ones that should really
19 still be in jail, as you spoke of before and
20 then do something else that's bad,
21 unfortunately, many of us, probably everybody
22 in this room, don't think that's the way it
23 should be. Unfortunately that's what we are
24 dealing with now and we have to combat that.
25 Again, I thank you for being here and I thank

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2 you all for being here too.

3 COMMISSIONER RYDER: If I may?

4 One of the things that you've heard me say
5 here 100 times, if you want to understand the
6 community and the culture you police you
7 police it better. That is the way we teach
8 our cops, to understand the different
9 cultures. That's why we have such a great
10 relationship. And again, I said it before,
11 I've had dinner at Farrah's house.

12 Understanding the culture. I've been into
13 mosques, temples, churches and addressing the
14 communities not trying to pretend I am them.
15 I'm me. You're you. But we can understand
16 each other. That's the way we try to teach
17 our cops.

18 The new part of our police academy,
19 which opens in June, the second phase is the
20 tactical village. We've not gotten away from
21 calling it a tactical village to a training
22 village. It's a community. And we're going
23 to bring the community with Dr. Williams at
24 the college, bring the students in, bring
25 people from the community in, and train with

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2 our police officers. And put them in that
3 residence when you respond to that residence.

4 Just as you just said, you respond
5 to the mosque and you got to realize when is
6 it acceptable with your shoes on not your
7 shoes on. Understanding the cultures, the
8 gestures. When it is to shake a hand and not
9 shake a hand.

10 So, that part, which we're about to
11 roll into for construction purposes, is huge
12 in training. Because you can read all the
13 documents you want. You get maybe a quarter
14 of what you understand from there. But when
15 you put it into a practical sense, pracademia
16 as I always call it, you start to understand
17 how you should respond to these things. It
18 will be a cultural change in the way we police
19 in this country and it will start right here
20 in Nassau County.

21 Because we believe in the process.
22 We listen to our legislators and our
23 cultures. But we have to train them in that
24 same way, understanding. Our cops are very
25 good. But we all know that we can be better

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2 at it and if we understand that culture we
3 will police better. I understand it.

4 The other thing, we keep saying
5 hate crime, hate crime, hate crime. In the
6 criminal sense there's only certain things
7 that are hate crimes. The swastika, the
8 noose, the burning of a cross. But if I use
9 language it's not a hate crime. We just saw
10 it this past weekend where the N word was
11 thrown around a dozen times by one
12 individual. It was aggravating me to the
13 point I got out of the car.

14 It's not a crime for language.
15 Maybe this time we should. Maybe this time we
16 need to make changes where, I get it, I'm a
17 First Amendment guy. But using that type of
18 language there's no reason for it except to
19 just cause hate and cause hurt on that person.

20 These are the type of things that
21 when we talk about changes in the way we want
22 to go forward maybe there's some deep seated
23 changes that need to happen that we stop that
24 language from being used. That it should be a
25 hate crime. If you commit an assault third

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2 it's a misdemeanor. If you commit an assault
3 third because the person is African-American,
4 Latino or Asian and you're doing it against
5 that person because of that reason that rises
6 the level of that crime to an E felony. Each
7 one bumps because it becomes the hate involved
8 in the crime.

9 But the language is where we get
10 into this divisiveness that causes so many of
11 our problems. We sit back and we can't do
12 anything about it except keep the parties
13 apart. That doesn't solve the problem. That
14 only puts it off to another day.

15 LEGISLATOR FORD: I agree with
16 the way that you're going to approach with
17 your training. I think for me I was blessed
18 that I worked in Queens. I was a phone
19 technician. I went into everybody's homes
20 whether to install or repair. And Queens is
21 definitely a melting pot. Whether I was in
22 Rosedale or Elmont I spent many times fixing
23 phones or installing phones in Richmond Hill
24 which has become a very large Indian and
25 Pakistani population.

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2 I think that for me it was such a
3 great experience. Because when you go into
4 somebody's home you're there with them and you
5 find out that you really don't have that many
6 differences. There are a lot of things that
7 we have alike. The one thing I noticed is I
8 don't care where you came from we all have
9 messy teenagers that we all complain about.

10 I think it was even for me to see
11 so many different cultures and to just go into
12 people's homes and it was such an experience
13 and it made me realize how alike we truly
14 really are. I think that's one way of a
15 breaking down barriers is if we realize and we
16 focus on what we have in common rather than
17 what we have differently. So, but we will now
18 go to Legislator Drucker.

19 LEGISLATOR DRUCKER: Give me one
20 second please.

21 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: Keep your
22 eyes on the road Arnie.

23 LEGISLATOR DRUCKER: I'm pulling
24 over right now. That's why I wanted to make
25 sure I'm safe. I want to thank you Chairwoman

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2 Ford for having this hearing. Thank you
3 presiding officer. Thank you for letting me
4 speak.

5 You know, nothing gets my blood
6 boiling, as I'm sure it does for everyone else
7 in this chamber, when it comes to
8 discrimination. You know, I've experienced it
9 throughout my lifetime. I've been
10 discriminated anti-Semitic slurs and other
11 forms of discrimination. And over the years
12 it's gotten me so passionately engaged to
13 combat it when it comes to racial
14 discrimination, xenophobia and all of that.
15 And this past year we got to see another form
16 of discrimination and hatred in the COVID-19
17 blame. And it's outrageous. I'm sure it's
18 outraged everyone else on the legislature
19 too.

20 We are all trying our best to find
21 ways that we can combat it, to speak out
22 against it. Yes, of course, we're all going
23 to speak out about it. But we, as
24 legislators, we have an opportunity to do
25 more. We're seeing a flurry of legislation on

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2 the federal level, on the state level, to
3 criminalize this type of discrimination. And
4 on the county level we're pursuing it too.
5 Yesterday I filed a bill, thankfully every one
6 of my colleagues on the caucus cosponsored it
7 because -- what Commissioner Ryder was just
8 talking about, how we should find a way to
9 criminalize this type of speech that are
10 designed to just elicit hatred and hurt
11 people.

12 In consultation with our legal
13 team, we're confronted with some First
14 Amendment obstacles there. Believe me, I
15 tried to pursue that. We're still discussing
16 it. But in the mean time, the bill that I
17 filed provides another avenue. Because if
18 there's one thing that this COVID-19
19 discrimination and anti-Asian hate has caused
20 it's caused economic fallout among our
21 Asian-American businesses and Asian-American
22 people who have businesses or go to these
23 types of businesses now are afraid to go to
24 visit them or patronize them.

25 So, the bill that I filed now

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2 provides a civil remedy. It provides a civil
3 remedy. So, if someone engages in that type
4 of behavior they can be held liable in a civil
5 remedy up to a \$25,000 fine or penalty. We
6 have to pull out all the stops here.

7 Yes, there's education. Education
8 can never stop. Education is the foundation
9 of hatred anyway and the way to combat it.
10 Social services with Commissioner Mozawalla
11 talked about too. Those are the services that
12 we need to certainly promote and help those
13 who are in need. Mentally challenged.
14 Mentally problematic people. Seniors who are
15 in need of it. So, those types of services
16 yes, we have to continue to promote them.

17 But you know what? We have
18 criminal penalties now but let's find a civil
19 penalty. Let's find a way that our county
20 attorney can go after people who are engaging
21 in this type of discrimination.

22 This is a bill that I think is very
23 important, and I got to believe that it's
24 something that we all support. We can't
25 countenance this type of discrimination. We

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2 can't countenance it in any way. We have to
3 root it out, punish it every possible way we
4 can and that's what this bill does. And we
5 continue to not countenance it by talking
6 about it. By continuing to call it out where
7 ever it is. Whatever form it takes.

8 It's anti-Asian. It's anti-racial
9 discrimination. It's religious
10 discrimination. It's xenophobia. It has to
11 be called out for what it is. Hatred really
12 has no place in Nassau County. We have to
13 uncover it, expose it and punish it where ever
14 we see it.

15 I wanted to thank you for giving me
16 an opportunity to say this.

17 LEGISLATOR FORD: Thank you and
18 safe driving. Legislator Rhoads.

19 LEGISLATOR RHOADS: Thank you
20 Madam Chairwoman. And again, I want to echo
21 many of my colleagues' comments. We spent a
22 lot of time talking about fear today. I think
23 it was President Bush that talked about
24 freedom and fear being at war with each
25 other. The reason that we're spending so much

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2 time on ways that we can combat fear is
3 because fear is the antithesis of freedom.
4 Someone's afraid to come out of their home,
5 someone's afraid to interact, they're not
6 really free. We want residents of Nassau
7 County not only to feel safe and feel free, we
8 want them to be safe and be free.

9 And it sort of dovetails. Arnie
10 mentioned it. I know Legislator Walker
11 mentioned it. But are there ways in your
12 opinion that you feel as though there are
13 inadequacies -- and I know Commissioner Ryder
14 you touched upon it specifically with respect
15 to hate crime legislation -- are there
16 inadequacies in our law that we can be
17 addressing as a legislature and how do you
18 feel as though they should be addressed? It's
19 really a question for both.

20 COMMISSIONER RYDER: From the
21 criminal standpoint we have to go by the penal
22 law CPL. Local legislation that will come
23 down that can help us when it comes to some of
24 these maybe there's a fine. Again, we're
25 dabbling in that First Amendment free speech

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2 language which it's not free speech. There's
3 a price that's paid for that speech and
4 there's a price that's paid on the street by
5 my members that have to stand between two
6 parties that are going at it, throwing around
7 some of the most vulgar language I've ever
8 heard trying to entice the other one to throw
9 the first punch. So, I don't know what we can
10 do in that area. As far as what we do now, I
11 think we do a great job with it.

12 There's more we can do and I've
13 learned a little bit today about how we can
14 address, again, through those points of
15 lights. Setting up those areas of my go-to
16 people in those communities. And again, we
17 use our counsels which we do a great job
18 with. But again, maybe there's a further
19 deeper dive into the community that we can
20 have these points of light to assist us.

21 It works both ways. It's not only
22 for the civilian in the community to report or
23 go to somebody that they trust to go to the
24 police. It's the police that many times we
25 have victims and we know a crime has occurred

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2 but we don't know where the victim is. The
3 victim has disappeared. That's because they
4 go into hiding because their afraid of their
5 immigration status. They're afraid of maybe
6 the language issues. So we reach back out to
7 that community leader and say hey, reach into
8 your community. We know there's a victim
9 there and we're trying to help those victims
10 and we will try protect them. So, it works
11 both ways these points of light.

12 As far as the legislation goes, any
13 legislation is always going to be helpful when
14 it comes to a hate crime and bias. What they
15 are off the top of my head, again, the
16 educational side, the awareness side, but
17 again, we dabble into that First Amendment
18 right that kind of makes it dicey.

19 LEGISLATOR RHOADS: Sure.
20 Commissioner Mozawalla, in your opinion, based
21 on your interaction and your involvement in
22 the community, do you feel as though and maybe
23 not limiting it just to legislation but are
24 there additional resources that we as a
25 legislature can be providing to help in the

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2 effort?

3 MS. MOZAWALLA: Not resources per
4 se but I think that the community in general
5 and talking to so many focus groups of
6 different ethnicity they feel a sense of not
7 belonging. They feel a sense of not being
8 safe. I think it's important for legislators,
9 elected officials to show up at events. At
10 the good waters. The temples. Know the
11 difference between the Muscheds and know about
12 these cultures. Understand these cultures
13 because these are your constituents. Just
14 reach out to them. Attend their events.
15 Speak with them. I think that would help at
16 least educate our elected officials about
17 these communities and give them also a point
18 of contact to reach out to.

19 LEGISLATOR RHOADS: I appreciate
20 that. Thank you.

21 LEGISLATOR FORD: Legislator
22 Birnbaum.

23 LEGISLATOR BIRNBAUM: Thank you
24 so much for giving me this opportunity to
25 speak. I'm not a member of the Public Safety

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2 Committee but I could not not be here because
3 I think this is of utmost importance. People
4 of Nassau County should feel safe. That's
5 what government is all about. Make our
6 residents of every community feel safe. I
7 think there's no doubt that there have been
8 poor role modeling from our upper level
9 government in the past and the root of this
10 cause was in the terminology with COVID.

11 People have lived with COVID for
12 over a year and I think it's changed people.
13 It's gotten people angry. People have been
14 isolated. They haven't been out socializing,
15 and I really think our whole society has taken
16 a step back this past year. So, I'm so
17 sorry. I really feel like apologizing to the
18 entire Asian-American community of what has
19 happened. It's just terrible.

20 And the district that I represent
21 is heavily Asian and we're on the border of
22 New York City. Hate doesn't know boundaries.
23 They don't know the geographical line. People
24 are scared to come out of their homes because
25 of what they see on TV or of what they heard.

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2 To me that's appalling. That we shouldn't be
3 living like that.

4 In my own community people have
5 approached me and said what can we do? What
6 should we do about it? I spoke to leaders of
7 Chinese associations and you know what the
8 answer was? Not anti-hatred rallies, unity
9 rallies. We should be uniting together. We
10 should be getting different community
11 organizations together. We have to all unite
12 and be one people.

13 I think exactly what you just said,
14 that government officials have to get to know
15 different cultures. I know Commissioner Ryder
16 has been to different services, and he doesn't
17 just make an appearance. He stays. He stays
18 there. He sees what the culture is. He talks
19 to people after the service. Gets to know
20 people and that's what has to go on in Nassau
21 County. We have to start uniting. We have to
22 have cultures getting to know one another.
23 And that's what I think is the answer. It's
24 the children. It's the adults. It's the
25 seniors. People tend to be in their own

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2 little bubbles. And even more so this past
3 year. They haven't been out with other
4 people.

5 So, I think everyone has to start
6 coming together as a community, knowing that
7 we're a mixed community. There's not just one
8 type of person. We're many different people.
9 Different backgrounds. We come from different
10 cultures. We have different practices. But
11 we're all residents of Nassau County. We
12 deserve the same rights. We should all feel
13 safe.

14 I think this is the start. We have
15 to have these conversations. We have to have
16 education. But we have to have community
17 groups getting to know one another. I think
18 that will be key.

19 LEGISLATOR FORD: Thank you
20 Legislator Birnbaum. Well said. Legislator
21 DeRiggi-Whitton.

22 LEGISLATOR DERIGGI-WHITTON: I
23 concur with many of my colleagues up here and
24 I truly hope that the message has been over
25 the last few months that all 19 of us agree

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2 that we want everyone to feel safe in Nassau
3 County and feel respected.

4 I want to give you a little
5 background. My father's sister married a very
6 prominent Filipino doctor. That was in the
7 1950s. I grew up, my cousins are
8 half-Filipino and half-Italian. I give you a
9 lot of credit for stepping up. I do know the
10 culture a bit. I do know how proud my uncle
11 Andy was. Unfortunately we lost him. I know
12 the respect that was given to the community.
13 How grateful he was to be here. The language,
14 they would not allow them to speak Filipino at
15 home. Which was too bad because they lost
16 that language.

17 I do know -- I think this has been
18 going on for longer than we are acknowledging
19 it. It didn't start in the last year. I
20 remember a few things, just minor, but enough
21 that I remember from growing up with them. I
22 think, if nothing else, there's been a lot of
23 horrible things. It's actually ironic because
24 my oldest cousin, Richard Alino, passed away
25 of COVID a year ago today and he was Filipino

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2 and Italian and just an incredible man.

3 My point is, there have been a lot
4 of horrible things during this past year. But
5 what I think it's doing is making us have some
6 of these difficult conversations. It's much
7 easier to ignore it and just pretend it didn't
8 happen to yourself. I know even some of
9 our -- going back further, I know the Irish
10 were hit with a lot. The Italians were hit
11 with a lot. There's this fear of the
12 unknown. Actually, the Italian and Irish
13 didn't even get along back then. I'm
14 half-Italian and half-Irish and my two
15 families didn't trust the other.

16 It's been a little bit of human
17 nature to fear the unknown. But I think we're
18 better than that at this point and I think
19 we've evolved. And I think that's what we're
20 seeing about the education and sensitivity. I
21 might be wrong, but I'm trying to be
22 optimistic in life.

23 I have three children myself. Talk
24 about United Nations. They have friends with
25 people from everywhere. I just don't get that

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2 same -- I'm going to say it -- but it's sort
3 of like that ignorant view of someone is not
4 looking like you and not being like you you
5 don't want anything to do with them. They're
6 not like that. They're very different.

7 So, although we do have a lot of
8 work to do, I do have hope for this next
9 future generation. I think they're going to
10 be more sensitive. And I think part of that
11 is coming from these difficult conversations.

12 Again, I thank you for having the
13 courage to come forward. And Commissioner
14 Ryder, as Legislator Rhoads said, if there is
15 anything we can do as a legislature of Nassau
16 County, I know our jurisdiction, we don't have
17 as much power over the penal law or anything
18 else, but if we can do anything to help make
19 these victims of any attacks, whether it be
20 African-American, Hispanic.

21 I was with the Hispanic chamber
22 yesterday. I heard things. They're not being
23 recorded as much. And I understand why with
24 them feeling vulnerable to start out with and
25 then to not to feel secure in their anonymity

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2 or at least being protected. In my opinion
3 it's not a good formula. So anything we can
4 do on this level, if there is anything, any
5 kind of light we can shed I'm with you 100
6 percent and I know my fellow legislators are
7 too. Please, any ideas you have we're more
8 than welcome, more than open to hear it.

9 COMMISSIONER RYDER: I'll come
10 back and give me 30 days and I think I can
11 come up with some ideas and plans we can
12 enhance both that trust in the community and
13 enhance the ability of reporting and
14 education. Give me 30 days. I got a little
15 free time now.

16 LEGISLATOR FORD: So you say.
17 Presiding Officer Nicoletto.

18 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: We
19 received another public comment from a
20 Mr. Zang living in New Hyde Park. This is
21 really for the commissioner.

22 How is the language support for
23 minorities upon emergency events? For
24 example, my mom, who lives with me in Nassau
25 County, doesn't speak any English. What if

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2 she's alone and attacked? When she dials 911
3 how would she proceed? If she just says that
4 I'm Chinese or that she speaks any other
5 language when calling would the operator be
6 able to immediately engage the language
7 service she or any other minority needing
8 support?

9 COMMISSIONER RYDER: Basically
10 the answer is yes. 911 has it. Our police
11 medics now have the iPhones with the app on it
12 and our cops, who are always our first
13 responders on the scene, have that same app
14 for language line. So yes, the ability to do
15 that is there.

16 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: How does
17 that work? They would engage the technology?
18 Someone speaking whatever language it is would
19 communicate with the 911 operator, it will be
20 translated by this technology? Is that how it
21 works?

22 COMMISSIONER RYDER: That is
23 correct. We contact language line from the
24 communications desk. I may not know in what
25 language or dialect of Chinese they're

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2 speaking. I may say can you assist me on
3 this? Oh, this is Cantonese. Let me get you
4 somebody. Boom. And they get me Cantonese
5 and they'll put them on the phone.

6 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: When the
7 operator speaks back to the person who's
8 calling does that then get translated into the
9 language of the caller?

10 COMMISSIONER RYDER: Yes. That
11 translator stays on. So there's a three-way
12 conversation. For the security side, I think
13 the answer to that question is, we've already
14 sent the ambulance. We've already sent the
15 cops. Sometimes -- we call it the hang up.
16 We'll get a kid picks up 911 and then hangs
17 up. Nothing was said. We're already sending
18 cops to that location. We already send the
19 cops and ambulance to that location.

20 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: Because
21 911 knows where the call is coming from
22 they'll have the address and be able to send
23 someone?

24 COMMISSIONER RYDER: We have the
25 identification on it.

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2 LEGISLATOR NICOLELLO: Imagine
3 how difficult it's going to be -- this is the
4 point Farrah made before -- there's so many
5 different languages and things. We have a
6 large Malayali community in New Hyde Park and
7 they speak a different language. It's a
8 different task but, again, I think we need to
9 put every resource that we have into making
10 sure the service is available.

11 LEGISLATOR FORD: Legislator Mule
12 has another question.

13 LEGISLATOR MULE: Yes. Thank
14 you. I have a follow-up. A follow up to my
15 questions. With regards to collection of
16 statistics, do those statistics, Commissioner
17 Ryder that you mentioned, do they include
18 numbers from the villages and cities as well
19 that are in Nassau County?

20 COMMISSIONER RYDER: No. They're
21 our crime numbers. The villages report their
22 own. If there's an arrest that's made from a
23 felony level we step in and we take those
24 numbers. If it's a misdemeanor or lower it
25 stays within the village police department.

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2 LEGISLATOR MULE: Is it possible
3 for the county to keep those statistics or get
4 those statistics from the villages and cities
5 so that we have a fuller picture of what is
6 actually happening in the county?

7 COMMISSIONER RYDER: We are as
8 good as the support we get from our village
9 police departments and they have all been
10 super supportive. We can work with them. We
11 will get those numbers for you.

12 LEGISLATOR MULE: So, there will
13 be some sort of institutionalization to
14 collect that information on an regular going
15 basis?

16 COMMISSIONER RYDER: Yes. That
17 is the ask. We will take care of it. No
18 problem.

19 LEGISLATOR MULE: Thank you very
20 much.

21 LEGISLATOR FORD: Anyone else?
22 Thank you very much. I know it was short
23 notice and I really thank both of you for your
24 understanding and your tolerance with this.
25 But I know, we all know how important this

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2 issue is. I thank very much for the gentlemen
3 who came today to speak as well. So, we have
4 work to do I guess and let us all --

5 COMMISSIONER RYDER: I will come
6 back in 30 days and I'll have something for
7 you.

8 LEGISLATOR FORD: We're going to
9 hold you to it.

10 COMMISSIONER RYDER: I will. I
11 promise.

12 LEGISLATOR FORD: I know you
13 will. I'm sure it's probably going to be
14 possibly less than 30 days. You'll have some
15 answers and some solutions. But let us all
16 work together and let us make sure that we
17 send a message loud and clear that whether or
18 not it's actions or even words it's not going
19 to be tolerated here in Nassau County. I
20 really think sometimes some comments that are
21 made, I know my Yankee fan out there, I won't
22 hold that against you because we like the
23 Mets, but with that being said, the fact that
24 you consistently have to remind people that
25 you are American just is really unnecessary

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2 and it can be cruel at times. I think that we
3 have to watch the words that we do say and
4 always gauge because we wouldn't like it said
5 to us. So we always have to be kind,
6 respectful and loving to everybody and that's
7 what the approach should be. Let us hope that
8 we achieve that.

9 So, I thank you all and we will
10 continue with this discussion moving forward.
11 I thank you very much.

12 (Committee was adjourned at 11:40
13 a.m.)

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CERTIFICATION

I, FRANK GRAY, a Notary
Public in and for the State of New
York, do hereby certify:

THAT the foregoing is a true and
accurate transcript of my stenographic
notes.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have
hereunto set my hand this 11th day of
April 2021.

FRANK GRAY