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Gov. Wolf Joins Commemoration of the Holocaust, Highlights Work to Reduce Hate Crimes

Harrisburg, PA – Today, Governor Tom Wolf joined the Pennsylvania Jewish Coalition and state and local leaders at the 38th Annual Civic Commemoration of the Holocaust in Harrisburg. The ceremony included the recognition of Holocaust survivors, as well as the children and grandchildren of survivors.

“The Holocaust was a monstrous, horrific period in human history,” said Gov. Wolf. “An immense evil perpetrated not by one extraordinary monster, but rather built on a foundation of bias, discrimination, hatred, and bigotry that is all too human, and all too familiar even these many decades later.

“In memorial, we honor that heartbreaking, indescribable loss. And we remind ourselves that every day, all of us share a responsibility to guard against hate, to speak out against discrimination, and to take action to end violence.”

Pennsylvania and the nation have experienced an increase in hate crimes over the past several years. According to data from the Pennsylvania State Police [Uniform Crime Reporting System](#), hate crimes have increased exponentially in Pennsylvania over the past two years. From 2016 through 2019, Pennsylvania saw an average of 88 hate crimes annually. In 2020, incidents of hate crimes rose by 33% to 111. Just this past year in 2021, there was a shocking 97% increase to 219 crimes.

These increases in Pennsylvania are not an anomaly, states across the nation are seeing the same increases. While these numbers and increases are alarming, it's important to note that hate crimes are also overwhelmingly underreported. At one point, the U.S. Department of Justice estimated that nearly two-thirds of hate crimes are never reported.

The Wolf Administration is taking action to combat bigotry and reduce hate crimes in Pennsylvania.

Governor Wolf has instructed the Pennsylvania State Police and other members of the Wolf Administration to join efforts by the Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission and the Anti-Defamation League to track and fight hate crimes.

Additionally, the Wolf Administration has awarded more than \$9 million in Nonprofit Security Grants in 2022. Earlier this month, Governor Wolf [announced \\$5.23 million](#) awarded to 120 churches, synagogues, mosques, temples, and other nonprofit organizations which serve diverse communities, and often face bias and hate crimes, to improve their facilities' security and protect against hate crimes.

The Nonprofit Security Grant Fund Program, administered by the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD), was established to provide grants to nonprofit organizations who principally serve individuals, groups or institutions that are included within a bias motivation category for single bias hate crime incidents as identified by the [FBI's Hate Crime Statistics publication](#). The categories include race/ethnicity/ancestry, religion, sexual orientation, disability, gender, and gender identity.

In January, [Gov. Wolf announced an additional \\$4.5 million](#) was allocated to the program from Pennsylvania's American Rescue Plan Act dollars.

PCCD has issued two previous Nonprofit Security Grant Fund Program solicitations in 2020 and 2021. A total of \$5 million in funding was awarded to each cohort for a total of 243 awards announced. Collectively, these funds have helped more than one million people who are associated with these organizations.

"Hate has no place in Pennsylvania. But to truly root out bigotry, we need every Pennsylvanian across the commonwealth to take a stand," Gov. Wolf said. "We must remember the horrors of the past – but more than that, we must act to build peace today. By working together every day to reject bigotry and promote peace and acceptance, we can stop hate in its tracks, and build a better future for our commonwealth and our world."

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