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SB 577 Testimony
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Thank you Chairman Prozanski, for the opportunity to offer testimony before the committee this morning. I am here to give my support to SB 577 and to share my story.

My family and I were assaulted after attending the Portland Pride Parade. A man yelled slurs at us and then violently attacked us. My brother took the brunt of the physical assault as this man held him by the throat and punched him in the head repeatedly all the while calling him homophobic slurs.

The process of reporting and seeking prosecution has been frustrating to say the least. From the moment we began speaking to the police we were given misleading and incorrect information, officers argued with us, the victims, about whether or not this qualified as a bias crime. The man who attacked us, Justin Watling was arrested but then almost immediately released from jail, despite a violent criminal history. Mr. Watling unsurprisingly did not show up for trial, and because he was not under supervision, he has not been located. Mr. Watling is believed to be in Washington State where he has already reoffended with a new assault charge from July . Under current bias crime law, despite the severity of the incident, this is a misdemeanor intimidation charge because he acted alone, and this misdemeanor arrest warrant is not serviceable in Washington.

This experience has brought to my attention how ineffective our bias crime laws are, and how much work needs to be done to train people at every step of the legal process on how to support victims. My ability to pursue justice in this case has everything to do with my privilege as a white woman, if Mr. Watling had chosen to target a transgender woman, someone who is undocumented, or a person of color that evening, they may have rightfully felt unsafe calling the police to report it. If victims don't report, perpetrators may feel they can act with impunity. Since the attack, I have sought to employ the privilege I hold to amplify this issue in the hope that we can find a way to fix the system and address this cycle of violence effectively before it escalates.

The Anti-Defamation League uses a graphic called the "pyramid of hate" as a teaching tool, The Pyramid shows biased behaviors, growing in complexity from the bottom to the top. The lower levels are Biased Attitudes and Acts of Bias then comes Discrimination, Bias Motivated Violence and finally Genocide. Like a pyramid, the lower levels provide the support for the upper levels. We cannot hope to prevent the most serious levels of hate if we cannot cripple it at it's foundations.

We have a responsibility to inoculate our society against further escalations of violence by creating a robust system for addressing hate crimes and hate speech.

ADL. / PYRAMID OF HATE

The *Pyramid* shows biased behaviors, growing in complexity from the bottom to the top. Although the behaviors at each level negatively impact individuals and groups, as one moves up the pyramid, the behaviors have more life-threatening consequences. Like a pyramid, the upper levels are supported by the lower levels. If people or institutions treat behaviors on the lower levels as being acceptable or "normal," it results in the behaviors at the next level becoming more accepted. In response to the questions of the world community about where the hate of genocide comes from, the *Pyramid of Hate* demonstrates that the hate of genocide is built upon the acceptance of behaviors described in the lower levels of the pyramid.

Genocide
The act or intent to deliberately and systematically annihilate an entire people

Bias Motivated Violence
Murder, Rape, Assault, Arson, Terrorism, Vandalism, Desecration, Threats

Discrimination
Economic discrimination, Political discrimination, Educational discrimination, Employment discrimination, Housing discrimination & segregation, Criminal Justice disparities

Acts of Bias
Bullying, Ridicule, Name-calling, Slurs/Epithets, Social Avoidance, De-humanization, Biased/Belittling Jokes

Biased Attitudes
Stereotyping, Insensitive Remarks, Fear of Differences, Non-inclusive Language, Microaggressions, Justifying biases by seeking out like-minded people, Accepting negative or misinformation/screening out positive information