To facilitate the expedited review of COVID–19 hate crimes, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MARCH 23, 2021

Ms. HIRONO (for herself, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. BOOKER, Ms. CANTWELL, Mr. DURBIN, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. KAINES, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. PADILLA, Ms. ROSEN, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. WARNER, Mr. BROWN, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. LEAHI, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. WARNock, Ms. WARREN, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. REED, and Mr. PETERS) introduced the following bill; which was read the first time

MARCH 24, 2021

Read the second time and placed on the calendar

A BILL

To facilitate the expedited review of COVID–19 hate crimes, and for other purposes.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,
SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “COVID–19 Hate Crimes Act”.

SEC. 2. REVIEW OF COVID–19 HATE CRIMES.

(a) In General.—Not later than 1 day after the date of enactment of this Act, the Attorney General shall designate an officer or employee of the Department of Justice whose sole responsibility during the applicable period shall be to facilitate the expedited review of COVID–19 hate crimes and reports of any such crime to Federal, State, or local law enforcement agencies.

(b) Definitions.—In this section:

(1) Applicable period.—The term “applicable period” means the period beginning on the date on which the officer or employee is designated under subsection (a), and ending on the date that is 1 year after the date on which the emergency period described in subparagraph (B) of section 1135(g)(1) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1320b–5(g)(1)) ends, except that the Attorney General may extend such period as appropriate.

(2) COVID–19 hate crime.—The term “COVID–19 hate crime” means a crime of violence (as such term is defined in section 16 of 18, United States Code) that is motivated by—
(A) the actual or perceived race, ethnicity, age, color, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, or disability of any person; and

(B) the actual or perceived relationship to the spread of COVID–19 of any person because of the characteristic described in subparagraph (A).

SEC. 3. GUIDANCE.

(a) GUIDANCE FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES.—The Attorney General shall issue guidance for State and local law enforcement agencies on how to—

(1) establish online reporting of hate crimes or incidents, and to have online reporting available in multiple languages as determined by the Attorney General; and

(2) expand culturally competent and linguistically appropriate public education campaigns, and collection of data and public reporting of hate crimes.

(b) GUIDANCE RELATING TO COVID–19 PANDEMIC.—The Attorney General and the Secretary of Health and Human Services, in coordination with the COVID–19 Health Equity Task Force and community-based organizations, shall issue guidance describing best
practices to mitigate racially discriminatory language in describing the COVID–19 pandemic.
A BILL

S. 937

Calendar No. 13

To facilitate the expedited review of COVID–19 hate crimes, and for other purposes.

MARCH 24, 2021

Read the second time and placed on the calendar.