

CODIFICATION

Section was formerly classified to section 15609 of Title 42, The Public Health and Welfare, prior to editorial reclassification and renumbering as this section.

CHAPTER 305—HATE CRIMES

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§ 30501. Findings

Congress makes the following findings:

(1) The incidence of violence motivated by the actual or perceived race, color, religion, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, or disability of the victim poses a serious national problem.

(2) Such violence disrupts the tranquility and safety of communities and is deeply divisive.

(3) State and local authorities are now and will continue to be responsible for prosecuting the overwhelming majority of violent crimes in the United States, including violent crimes motivated by bias. These authorities can carry out their responsibilities more effectively with greater Federal assistance.

(4) Existing Federal law is inadequate to address this problem.

(5) A prominent characteristic of a violent crime motivated by bias is that it devastates not just the actual victim and the family and friends of the victim, but frequently savages the community sharing the traits that caused the victim to be selected.

(6) Such violence substantially affects interstate commerce in many ways, including the following:

(A) The movement of members of targeted groups is impeded, and members of such groups are forced to move across State lines to escape the incidence or risk of such violence.

(B) Members of targeted groups are prevented from purchasing goods and services, obtaining or sustaining employment, or participating in other commercial activity.

(C) Perpetrators cross State lines to commit such violence.

(D) Channels, facilities, and instrumentalities of interstate commerce are used to facilitate the commission of such violence.

(E) Such violence is committed using articles that have traveled in interstate commerce.

(7) For generations, the institutions of slavery and involuntary servitude were defined by the race, color, and ancestry of those held in bondage. Slavery and involuntary servitude were enforced, both prior to and after the adoption of the 13th amendment to the Constitution of the United States, through widespread public and private violence directed at persons because of their race, color, or ancestry, or perceived race, color, or ancestry. Ac-

cordingly, eliminating racially motivated violence is an important means of eliminating, to the extent possible, the badges, incidents, and relics of slavery and involuntary servitude.

(8) Both at the time when the 13th, 14th, and 15th amendments to the Constitution of the United States were adopted, and continuing to date, members of certain religious and national origin groups were and are perceived to be distinct “races”. Thus, in order to eliminate, to the extent possible, the badges, incidents, and relics of slavery, it is necessary to prohibit assaults on the basis of real or perceived religions or national origins, at least to the extent such religions or national origins were regarded as races at the time of the adoption of the 13th, 14th, and 15th amendments to the Constitution of the United States.

(9) Federal jurisdiction over certain violent crimes motivated by bias enables Federal, State, and local authorities to work together as partners in the investigation and prosecution of such crimes.

(10) The problem of crimes motivated by bias is sufficiently serious, widespread, and interstate in nature as to warrant Federal assistance to States, local jurisdictions, and Indian tribes.

(Pub. L. 111-84, div. E, §4702, Oct. 28, 2009, 123 Stat. 2835.)

CODIFICATION

Section was formerly classified as a note under section 249 of Title 18, Crimes and Criminal Procedure, prior to editorial reclassification and renumbering as this section.

§ 30502. Definitions

In this division—

(1) the term “crime of violence” has the meaning given that term in section 16 of title 18;

(2) the term “hate crime” has the meaning given that term in section 280003(a) of the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994 (Public Law 103-322; 108 Stat. 2096), as amended by this Act;

(3) the term “local” means a county, city, town, township, parish, village, or other general purpose political subdivision of a State; and

(4) the term “State” includes the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and any other territory or possession of the United States.

(Pub. L. 111-84, div. E, §4703(b), Oct. 28, 2009, 123 Stat. 2836.)

REFERENCES IN TEXT

This division, referred to in text, is division E of Pub. L. 111-84, Oct. 28, 2009, 123 Stat. 2835, known as the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act. For complete classification of division E to the Code, see Short Title of 2009 Act note set out under section 10101 of this title and Tables.

Section 280003(a) of the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994 (Public Law 103-322; 108 Stat. 2096), as amended by this Act, referred to in par. (2), is section 280003(a) of Pub. L. 103-322, Sept. 13, 1994, 108 Stat. 2096, as amended by Pub. L. 111-84, which enacted provisions listed in a table relating to sentencing guidelines set out as a note under section 994 of Title 28, Judiciary and Judicial Procedure.