

**A RESOLUTION URGING THE GEORGIA SENATE TO ENACT HOUSE BILL 426
WHEN THE GEORGIA GENERAL ASSEMBLY RECONVENES IN MID-JUNE 2020
AND FOR GOVERNOR KEMP TO IMMEDIATELY SIGN HOUSE BILL 426 INTO
LAW UPON ITS ENACTMENT**

WHEREAS, criminal offenses occur throughout the United States on a daily basis called "hate crimes" where persons are victimized because of their immutable characteristics such as race, religion or sexual orientation; and

WHEREAS, hate crimes target victims simply for who they are and all that matters to the assailant is that the victim appears to be of a particular race, religion, or other group; and

WHEREAS, in these crimes, violence is not used as a means for victim compliance. Rather, inflicting maximum violence is the goal; and

WHEREAS, because hate crime victims are interchangeable and random, these crimes terrorize the entire victim's community and often lead to similarly terrorizing retaliatory hate crimes against the perpetrator's community; and

WHEREAS, laws that provide enhanced penalties for criminals who commit hate crimes, are a way for society to recognize that these crimes strike special fear within victimized groups, fragment communities, and tear at the very fabric of our democratic way of life; and

WHEREAS, there can only be a hate crime if an underlying criminal act is committed; and

WHEREAS, in 1993 the U.S. Supreme Court unanimously ruled that hate crime penalty enhancement laws are constitutional and do not punish speech; and

WHEREAS, the FBI's 2018 hate crime statistics, the most recent, reflect that local law enforcement agencies reported 7,120 hate crimes to the FBI, compared to 6,121 and 5,850 in 2016 and 2017; and

WHEREAS, in 2018 the FBI recorded the highest number of hate crime murders since it started keeping hate crime data in 1994: and

WHEREAS, the U.S. Department of Justice estimates that there over 250,000 non-fatal hate crimes annually; and

WHEREAS, anyone can be a perpetrator or victim of a hate crime and 2018 FBI statistics reflect that 19% of race-based hate crimes were against white

people, 13% of religious-based hate crimes were against Christians, and 47% of gender-based hate crimes were against men; and

WHEREAS, in 2018 Georgia law enforcement agencies only reported 35 hate crimes to the FBI, but Ohio and North Carolina, which have approximately the same population size as Georgia, reported 350 and 140, respectively; and

WHEREAS, the City of Dunwoody passed a non-discrimination ordinance in June 2019; and

WHEREAS, the State of Georgia is one of only five states that do not have a hate crime law in place; and

WHEREAS, it is critical that all Georgians be protected from hate crimes; and

WHEREAS, in 2019 the Georgia House of Representatives passed House Bill 426, a hate crimes penalty enhancement measure.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the City of Dunwoody urges the Georgia Senate to enact House Bill 426, as written, when it goes back into session mid-June and for Governor Kemp to immediately sign the bill into law after enactment.

SO RESOLVED AND EFFECTIVE, this the 15th day of June, 2020.

Approved:

Lynn P. Deutsch, Mayor

Attest:

Sharon Lowery, City Clerk

(SEAL)