In a disturbing trend, reported hate crimes have increased during each of the last four presidential campaign cycles. **The current political climate, record high number of reported hate crimes, and lack of accountability from social media platforms are cause for concern as we approach the 2024 election cycle.**

- The most recent data from the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) show that 2021 was the highest year on record for reported hate crimes since the FBI began publishing the data in 1991. It also showed the lowest number of law enforcement participation since 2012.
- White supremacists and white nationalists have been particularly active during the last four campaign cycles.
- The current political climate is highly charged. Campaigns to whitewash U.S. history and deny the rights of the LGBTQ+ community have turned hate into campaign platforms. Contributing to this climate are social media companies that have not internalized the lessons of the past and have not done enough to push back against hate and disinformation on their platforms.
  - A wave of hateful disinformation claiming that LGBTQ+ people “groom” children has spread widely on social media. Similarly, the antisemitic and xenophobic “great replacement” conspiracy has also spread widely on social media and has inspired many deadly hate crimes.
  - Since 2020, more than 350 pieces of so-called “anti-critical race theory” legislation have been introduced in legislatures across the country.
  - In 2022, 315 anti-LGBTQ+ bills were introduced in state legislatures across the country. Of these, 29 passed. Most of these bills targeted the transgender community and especially transgender children.
  - Reported hate crimes across the board have nearly doubled since 2014
- Research has shown that the 2008 election cycle served as a “rebirth” of the anti-government militia movement from the 1990s. The final weeks of the 2008 election saw an increase in hate crimes targeting racial and ethnic minorities as the United States elected its first Black president.
Some white nationalist leaders saw 2012 as their last chance to make their case to “white America” and used the reelection of President Obama as an opportunity to recruit and mobilize like-minded individuals. Reported hate crimes increased in 2012 by about 5 percent from the previous year. In August 2012, the Sikh community was targeted by a tragic hate crime in Oak Creek, Wisconsin, when a white supremacist attacked a gurdwara — killing seven. This was the first in a series of mass hate crimes over the next decade.

The 2016 election cycle provided a platform for white nationalists that they had long been seeking. Hate crimes have been on the rise since 2015 and have not returned to pre-2016 election cycle numbers. During this time, reported anti-Muslim hate crimes increased by nearly 70 percent from 2014 to 2015. The following year saw a 26 percent increase.

2020 saw a jump of more than 13 percent in reported hate crimes and a violent backlash against the racial justice protests of 2020. In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic and the anti-Asian bigotry stoked by public figures, major cities in the United States also saw an alarming increase in anti-Asian hate crimes from 2019 to 2020 — a nearly 150 percent increase.

Every sector has a role to play to address the highly charged political climate leading into the 2024 elections:

- Social media platforms must invest in de-platforming hate for the upcoming local, state, and national elections.
- The federal government must confront and address white supremacist violence without further criminalizing communities of color, religious minorities, and other marginalized communities.
- Congress must mandate hate crime data collection and reporting.
- Public officials must speak out against hate.

### Community Specific Numbers from the FBI’s 2021 Hate Crime Data

#### Anti-Arab Hate Crimes

- The historical negative portrayal of Arabs by the media and entertainment industries — as well as discriminatory government policies, a political climate of exclusion, and the “backlash” effect of acts of mass violence — have all contributed to the targeting of Arab Americans. The FBI’s 2021 data showed a nearly 50 percent increase in reported anti-Arab hate crimes from 2020.

#### Anti-Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) Hate Crimes

- The most recent data from the FBI showed a 168 percent increase in anti-Asian hate crimes reported from 2020 to 2021. This is in large part due to the targeting of the AAPI community in the wake of the global COVID-19 pandemic. Similarly, in a national survey in the fall of 2021, Stop AAPI Hate found that one in five Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders had experienced a hate incident in 2020 or 2021.
Anti-Black or African American Hate Crimes

- Anti-Black hate crimes are known as the “prototypical” hate crime. The FBI reported a 14 percent increase in anti-Black hate crimes from 2020 to 2021. This follows a 46 percent increase from 2019 to 2020 following backlash from the racial justice protests of 2020.

Anti-Hispanic or Latino Hate Crimes

- Anti-Latino and anti-immigrant rhetoric was a central part of Donald Trump’s campaign for president in 2016. This racist rhetoric continued throughout his presidency and contributed to devastating violence against Hispanic and Latino communities. The 2021 FBI data showed the highest number of anti-Hispanic hate crimes ever reported — a 35 percent increase from 2020.

Anti-Islamic (Muslim) Hate Crimes

- From 2020 to 2021, the community was subjected to a 40 percent increase in reported hate crimes. Anti-Muslim campaign rhetoric and hate crimes peaked during Donald Trump’s campaign for the presidency, with the spike in 2016 marking the highest number of reported hate crimes against the community since 2001.

Anti-Jewish Hate Crimes

- The number of reported anti-Jewish hate crime incidents increased by 20 percent from 2020 to 2021, according to the latest FBI report. Antisemitic incidents are also on the rise according to data collected by the Anti-Defamation League (ADL). ADL’s most recent Audit of Antisemitic Incidents documented a record high of 3,697 antisemitic incidents in 2022, a 36 percent increase from 2021. While hate crimes make up only a small percentage of hate incidents, ADL documented a 26 percent increase in antisemitic assaults and a 51 percent increase in antisemitic vandalism incidents from 2021 to 2022.

Anti-Sikh Hate Crimes

- The number of reported anti-Sikh hate crimes has increased significantly, reaching a record high in 2021. Currently, anti-Sikh hate crimes are the second most common form of religiously motivated hate crimes after anti-Jewish hate crimes.

Anti-LGBTQ Hate Crimes

- Reported hate crimes based on sexual orientation increased by 54 percent from 2020 to 2021, with anti-lesbian hate crimes increasing by more than 80 percent, anti-LGBT (mixed group) increasing by 70 percent, and anti-gay hate crimes increasing by 40 percent.

Anti-Disability Hate Crimes

- Reported anti-disability hate crimes increased by nearly 17 percent from 2020 to 2021. The number of reported hate crimes based on mental health increased, while the number of reported hate crimes based on physical disability remained the same.