

BASF Issues Statement Regarding Hate Crimes

November 29, 2016 – San Francisco – The Bar Association of San Francisco (BASF) decries the rising acts of intimidation and violence based upon race, gender, sexual orientation, religion, and birth place that have been widely reported in recent weeks. Statistics recently released by the Federal Bureau of Investigation showed a 67% increase in hate crimes against Muslim Americans in 2015. Hate crimes against members of other groups have also increased in communities across the country.

The media has also reported an alarming increase in hate speech and hate crimes. Here in San Francisco, Interim Police Chief Toney Chaplin has reported that hate crimes are up 10% from last year and up 28% from two years ago. There are reports here in the Bay Area that letters threatening genocide were recently sent to mosques; a few weeks ago, an African American musician was killed in El Sobrante and the police have openly stated that he was targeted by the three white men who killed him because he was black; and a few weeks ago in Vallejo a school teacher apparently said to a Latina student, “Did you get your plane tickets, because you are going to leave [the country].” These are just a few of many widely reported stories in the Bay Area alone.

Such violence and intimidation -- specifically based on a victim’s identity -- are contrary to our most basic principles and have no place in a civil society. We are a pluralistic, diverse nation, and that diversity is one of our core strengths.

An attack based on a person’s identity is an attack on us all, and BASF will consistently speak out to condemn such violence, and stands ready to help those who have been the victims of such hate crimes.