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Alliance Urges Senate Committee to Pass Inclusive Hate Crime Law

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The Central Indiana Alliance Against Hate (Alliance) urges passage of a comprehensive and inclusive hate crime law by the Senate Committee on Corrections and Criminal Law. On Tuesday, January 30th, the Committee will debate passage of two bad amendments to [SB 418](#). The inclusion of either of these bad amendments would send a message of bigotry across our county that would negatively impact Indiana’s economic development.

Bad Amendment #1: Would eliminate *gender identity* as one of the named characteristics in SB 418. Passage of a hate crime law which removes any of the characteristics commonly targeted by hate would send a message to businesses like Amazon and others that Indiana is willing to accept certain types of hate crimes even when well documented that gender identity is a characteristic commonly targeted in hate crimes in Indiana and nationwide.

Bad Amendment #2: Would eliminate the listing of *any* characteristics from SB 418 – essentially making the law useless for prosecution as has been shown by laws previously passed in Georgia and elsewhere. The State of Georgia is currently with Indiana as one of only five states without a hate crime law. In 2004, the Georgia Supreme Court ruled the state’s then hate crime law was unconstitutional due to its lack of named characteristics in its law. This year, Georgia is reviewing passage of a comprehensive hate crime, including all characteristics currently listed in SB 418, to remedy this mistake. Atlanta, GA is also one of the cities being considered by Amazon for its HQ2.

“Numerous polls have shown overwhelming Hoosier support for passage of a hate crime law including the Ball State Hoosier Survey finding that 65% of Hoosiers favor passage. Last week, city leadership and businesses joined with nonprofits and advocates to encourage passage of a law to remove the stain upon Indiana for employee recruitment,” stated David Sklar of the Indianapolis Jewish Community Relations Council. “If we truly want to show businesses like Amazon that Indiana welcomes all and will protect their employees if targeted by hate, then it’s is time for our legislative leadership to say so by refusing these bad amendments and passing an effective and inclusive hate crime law,” he continued.

Testimony provided by Hoosiers at SB 418’s hearing last week spoke of the economic impact of Indiana’s lack of a hate crime law. Hoosiers targeted by hate crimes also provided powerful and heartbreaking testimony of not feeling welcome and having few options for justice.

“Indiana cannot continue to allow the rhetoric and misinformation of a small and biased group of

individuals who believe that Hoosiers should *not* have access to justice if targeted by hate due to their sexual orientation or gender identity,” explained Amy Nelson of the Central Indiana Alliance Against Hate. “Passage of a comprehensive, inclusive hate crime law will send a powerful message to our nation that Indiana is the place where businesses and their employees would be proud to call home,” she continued.

The Central Indiana Alliance Against Hate demands the Senate Committee on Corrections and Criminal Law vote to pass a comprehensive and inclusive SB 418 that does not include the amendments noted above. For more information or updates, visit the Central Indiana Alliance Against Hate’s [Facebook page](#). Read the [Alliance’s Fact Sheet](#) for more answers to frequently asked questions about a hate crime law.

About the Central Indiana Alliance Against Hate

The Central Indiana Alliance Against Hate (Alliance) formed in March 2017 and is a group of individuals, nonprofits, and businesses that exist to reduce the occurrence and combat the consequences of hate crimes and hate-based incidents. The Alliance is a project of the Fair Housing Center of Central Indiana. More information on the Alliance is at: <https://www.fhcci.org/ciaah/> #IndianaNeedsAHateCrimeLaw