

A COMMUNITY-CENTERED APPROACH TO CONFRONTING HATE VIOLENCE

Around the country and right here in New York City, there has been an alarming rise in hate violence, in recent months especially against Asian Americans, fueled by right-wing rhetoric about the coronavirus. In March 2021 a shooter targeting Asian women killed 8 people at Atlanta area spas, and in NYC, there have been hundreds of incidents of hate and violence against Asian people, including the brutal beating of Yao Pan Ma in Harlem in April.

Identity-based violence against Jewish, Muslim, LGBTQ, immigrants, and Black people has also risen in recent years, both in NYC and across the country. Rising xenophobia, fueled from rhetoric from the Trump administration on down, has led to violence like the murder of 11 Jews in the Tree of Life Synagogue outside Philadelphia by a killer obsessed with the idea that Jews support refugees seeking to enter the United States.

Brad will use the platform of the Comptroller's office to be a strong ally to communities facing identity-based hate, and work with grassroots organizations, educators, and community leaders to fund and support community-centered strategies to combat hate. Using the tools of the office, he will audit the performance of the city's current strategies to combat and prevent hate violence, and use that analysis to make the case for more strategic approaches.

A LONGTIME ALLY AGAINST HATE

Brad has been a longtime partner in the work to combat hate violence, focused on prevention and education strategies to prevent hate, rather than simply increasing policing resources for investigations after incidents occur. As a proud and committed Jew, Brad believes that the work to end hate violence is both personal and universal, something we do as a matter of protecting ourselves and those we love, and making sure that everyone in our city can be their free and full selves. He worked to strengthen NYC's Human Rights Law to protect against discrimination, and to secure funding for investigation and enforcement

through the NYC Human Rights Commission. On too many occasions, he has led or joined rallies and marches against anti-Semitic or Islamophobic hate crimes in and around his district.

Brad has supported advocates who organized for City Council funding for community-led approaches to hate crime prevention. In 2019, a coalition of grassroots organizations led by Jews For Racial & Economic Justice (JFREJ) and the New York City Anti-Violence Project (AVP), representing diverse communities from across NYC, came together and won funding for the Hate Violence Prevention Initiative through the City Council with Brad's support. Brad then joined the effort, called "NYC Against Hate," bringing together Jews and Muslims to conduct multi-lingual outreach and education in Borough Park and Kensington.

Unfortunately, the Hate Violence Prevention Initiative faced repeated opposition and pushback from the Council's Budget Negotiating Team under Speaker Corey Johnson's leadership. Despite organizing the effort, JFREJ was eliminated from Council funding for the initiative, as was Make the Road NY. Funding for the Anti-Violence Project and the Audre Lorde Project was also cut, but then restored after protest. Groups were added to the effort, without the support of the coalition that had proposed it, who did not share the goals or values of the initiative. Then, after one year, the program was cut in the FY20 budget (which Brad voted against), even after a sharp rise in hate crimes against Asian communities during the pandemic.

A COMPTROLLER WHO PARTNERS WITH COMMUNITIES

Brad will continue to work with communities on strategies to prevent hate violence, and assess the efficacy of police responses to hate crimes. As Comptroller, Brad will:

- Advocate for the restoration and expansion of funding for the Hate Violence Prevention Initiative to support community organizations doing education and outreach for hate violence prevention. The City Council allocated \$1 million in discretionary funds towards the Hate Violence Prevention Initiative in FY19, but cut that funding in FY20. Brad will continue to advocate for restoring the program, and expanding it to provide more resources for community organizations working on hate violence prevention. As Comptroller, he will study the outcomes of the program, and make the financial case for that restoration.
- Conduct a performance audit of the NYPD Hate Crimes Taskforce to assess their effectiveness in following up on reported hate crimes, language accessibility, and outreach strategies. The vast majority of hate violence and harassment goes unreported, many incidents are reported but not classified as hate crimes, while still other incidents are reported but never face serious investigation or resolution. Brad will work with community members to assess the performance of the NYPD's hate crimes taskforce.
- Conduct a comparative cost-benefit audit of the City's various offices and taskforces to combat hate to assess the relative costs, outcomes, and collateral harms of policing-first versus community-first strategies. Using data, budget analysis, and interviews with community members, Brad will take a close look at the NYPD's Hate Crimes Taskforce, the Mayor's Office for Prevention of Hate Crimes, the NYC Human Rights Commission's hate crimes unit, and the hopefully-restored community-based Hate Violence Prevention Initiative, to assess the relative costs, outcomes, and collateral harms and benefits of policing-first versus community-first strategies to combat hate.