



CHRISTOPHER T. SUNUNU
Governor

Governor's Advisory Council on Diversity and Inclusion

November 4, 2020

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His Excellency Christopher T. Sununu
Governor of the State of New Hampshire
State House
107 North Main Street
Concord, NH 03301

Dear Governor Sununu,

The Governor's Council on Diversity and Inclusion ("the Council") is alarmed by a recent increase in hateful, racist vandalism and sloganizing that has been observed throughout the Granite State. Members of the Council note that they have seen or had reported to them instances of bigoted symbolism, including swastikas, spray painted on private property, and racist slogans encouraging violence posted to individual's cars and circulated on the social media of elected officials. It is the Council's understanding that some, but not all, of these incidents have been reported to law enforcement, including the Civil Rights Division of the New Hampshire Department of Justice.

The Council has serious concerns about the impact of these hateful incidents on our communities and our state. Such incidents inflict pain and fear, intimidate those targeted, and cause significant harm to those targeted and their communities. Targeted community members may even fear participating in general public life and civic engagement because of concerns for personal safety. Such incidents undermine our state's reputation, growth, and diversity. As New Hampshire strives to be a place where diversity is valued and seen as a source of strength, these incidents send the wrong message.

The Council believes that the way to fight hate speech is to identify it and condemn it. If such bigoted messages go unchallenged by our state's highest elected officials, it signals a tacit acceptance that blatant expressions of hatred and acts of intimidation are acceptable and a normal part of public discourse. The message from New Hampshire's most senior officials needs to be clear and

unequivocal: we reject discrimination, hatred, and violence, and we are committed to creating a more equitable and welcoming state.

The Council respectfully urges you to continue to consistently speak up and denounce messages of hate when they occur anywhere in our state. We urge the Attorney General and the Department of Justice to continue their work investigating reports of intimidation and threats of violence. We urge your office be in direct contact with members of the affected community when the office learns of a hateful incident to express their support and discuss an appropriate response. We also urge members of the public who see hate speech, threats, or intimidation to report those incidents to the Attorney General and law enforcement.

All Granite Staters deserve to feel safe in their own community. We look forward to continuing to work with you to make this aspiration a reality in the State of New Hampshire.

Sincerely,

The Governor's Advisory Council on
Diversity and Inclusion