



PRESS RELEASE

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Prosecutor Lucido Says Hatred has No Place in Macomb County: Secures \$800K Hate Crimes Grant

Mount Clemens, MI - Prosecutor Peter J. Lucido established the Macomb County Prosecutor's Office first ever Hate Crimes Unit in 2022 to prosecute Hate Crimes in Macomb County. Thanks to the support of the Macomb County Board of Commissioners, the County has accepted the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd Jr. Hate Crime Program Grant from the Department of Justice. This \$800,000 grant award the Macomb County Prosecutor's Office successfully applied for is to be used over the next four years to fund a Principal Trial Attorney for the Hate Crimes Unit and community outreach.

Prosecutor Peter J. Lucido is proud to announce that Macomb County Assistant Prosecuting Attorney Patrick Coletta will head the Hate Crimes Unit. The Hate Crimes Unit works with law enforcement to prosecute Hate Crimes where hatred was a factor. Hate Crimes, such as Ethnic Intimidation, would be an additional charge to separate assaultive and property damage crimes. In Michigan, a person may be guilty of ethnic intimidation (two year felony) if that person maliciously, and with specific intent to intimidate or harass another person because of that person's race, color, religion, gender, or national origin, causes physical contact with another person, damages, destroys, or defaces any real or personal property of another person, or threatens, by word or act, to do so, if there is reasonable cause to believe that such an act will occur.

"I appointed Assistant Prosecutor Patrick Colletta to head our Hate Crimes Unit to affirm my commitment to confronting intolerance and bigotry. Hate Crimes undermine the foundation of our society, and my office is dedicated to fostering a community where every resident can live without fear and discrimination," said Macomb County Prosecutor Peter J. Lucido. "Martin Luther King, Jr. once stated that the arc of the moral universe is long but it bends towards justice. Our Hate Crimes Unit represents our joint endeavor to hasten that bend, ensuring equality, dignity, and compassion for all."

The Macomb County Prosecutor's Office is one of only 16 nation-wide recipients of the Department of Justice's Hate Crimes Grant. Macomb County is the third largest county in Michigan with very diverse communities. The south end of the county is very urban and the north is very rural. The focus of the Hate Crime grant is to benefit communities most impacted by Hate Crimes based on the FBI statistics that 84% of Hate Crimes are based on race, 9% on religion, and 6% on sexual orientation. In 2022, the FBI national statistics showed there were 11,288 single-bias incidents of hate crimes involving 13,278 victims.

By investing in resources, training for law enforcement, and fostering community awareness, the Macomb County Prosecutor's Office aims not only to prosecute offenders but also to prevent future incidents and create a more resilient and united community.

"Macomb County is one of the most diverse counties in the state. This much needed grant will help educate law enforcement and our communities and prosecute those who turn against our neighbors," said Macomb County Prosecutor Peter J. Lucido. "The acquisition of the Department of Justice Matthew Shepard and James Byrd Jr. Hate Crime Program Grant marks significant strides in addressing and combating Hate Crimes in Macomb County."

The establishment of the Macomb County Prosecutor's Office first ever Hate Crimes Unit and the acquisition of the Department of Justice Matthew Shepard and James Byrd Jr. Hate Crime Program Grant establishes a landmark approach in addressing and combating hate crimes in Macomb County.

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