

OFFERED BY COUNCILORS RUTHZEE LOUIJEUNE, ARROYO, BOK, BREADON, COLETTA, FERNANDES ANDERSON, FLAHERTY, LARA, MEJIA, WORRELL AND FLYNN



CITY OF BOSTON IN CITY COUNCIL

ORDER FOR A HEARING TO DISCUSS AN INCREASE IN RACIST INCIDENTS IN BOSTON AND THE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION'S ROLE IN TRACKING, REPORTING, AND ADDRESSING DISCRIMINATION AND CIVIL RIGHTS VIOLATIONS

WHEREAS; It is the mission of the Human Rights Commission to engage in relationships and partnerships that embody the principles of dignity and respect, and to create a culture of human rights compliance and accountability, and act as a driver for social change based on principles of substantive equality, equity, and inclusion for all; *and*

WHEREAS; The Human Rights Commission includes public, community, and private partnerships in providing outreach and information, education, and technical help in resolving discriminatory incidents, referring discrimination complaints to the right entities for resolution, and understand patterns and practices of systematic discrimination; *and*

WHEREAS; Bostonians are growing increasingly concerned with the increased activity of racist activities in the City of Boston; *and*

WHEREAS; A vocal and increasingly violent minority continue to overtly and strategically preach and push white supremacy in coordinated efforts: whether it was the Unite the Right rally in Charlottesville in 2017; the attack on the U.S. Capitol on January 6, 2021; a protest by white supremacists in front of Brigham & Women's Hospital and at the St. Patrick's Day Parade; or the recent white supremacist march on July 2, 2022 through the city that resulted in white supremacists assaulting a Black resident; *and*

WHEREAS; Our biggest threat to freedom and safety is white supremacy in all its forms. This same group that "marched" in Boston on July 2 recently targeted a Pride festival in Idaho. In 2021, reports identified more than a dozen hate groups in Massachusetts, including 388 specific incidents of racism, extremism, and antisemitism. Our Asian American Pacific Islander ("AAPI") residents in Chinatown and throughout our city, especially our elders, are experiencing record numbers of hate incidents and attacks;

WHEREAS; Our Mayor and former colleague, Michelle Wu, has seen open threats of violence and hate speech lobbied against her as the first elected woman Mayor and as our first elected Mayor of color;

WHEREAS; Many residents are unaware of the work of the Human Rights Commission. At a meeting in Chinatown on June 6, 2022, members of the AAPI residents expressed concern about what to do when non-violent assaults, slurs, or threats occur. For a variety of reasons, some residents expressed a hesitancy to call the Boston Police Department when these incidents occur. The Human Rights Commission can be filling the reporting gap; *and*

WHEREAS; Creating a more impactful and modernized commission may involve, but not limited to, updating the language of the ordinance, name of the commission, and strengthening its enforcement powers;

WHEREAS; Boston is committed to a zero-tolerance approach to hate crimes and racist incidents and is thus committed to eliminating racism in every form. Our freedom and our rights are bound together. Boston must be an inclusive city that embraces people from all walks of life, and no group of white supremacists can drag this city backwards. Therefore, we must begin collecting and reporting on the human rights, civil rights, discrimination and hate crime incidents, complaints and violations in Boston, particularly incidents involving threats of violence; *and*

WHEREAS; Boston must ensure an effective, community-centered, and responsive commission to ensure and provide for the appropriate resources and responses to the growing incidents of hate, racism, and discrimination; **NOW, THEREFORE BE IT**

ORDERED; That the appropriate committee of the Boston City Council hold a hearing discussing the increase in white supremacist incidents in Boston and the Human Rights Commission's role in tracking, reporting, and addressing the incidents of hate and discrimination; **AND BE IT FURTHER**

ORDERED; That representatives from the Human Rights Commission, Boston Police Civil Rights Unit, Massachusetts Office of Civil Rights, Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination, Boston Employment Commission, Office of Fair Housing and Equity, Office of LGBTQ+ Advancement, Office of Immigrant Advancement, Black Men and Boys Commission and other relevant government entities, non-profits, and interested parties be invited to attend and testify.