



NEWS RELEASE

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Zionsville mayor issues executive order on bias crimes

Today, Mayor Haak signed an executive order to provide additional education and outreach in Zionsville to ensure that those who commit bias crimes are properly identified. The executive order also states that the Mayor urges the legislature to pass legislation providing all Hoosiers protection against bias crimes.

Also today, the Zionsville Town Council unanimously passed a resolution encouraging the Indiana General Assembly to pass bias crimes legislation at the state level during the 2019 legislative session.

The Mayor's executive order states that two steps will be taken to ensure those who commit bias crimes are identified: the Chief of Police and the Zionsville Police Department will establish training to inform and educate all Zionsville officers on ways to identify bias crimes and the Chief of Police and the Zionsville Police Department will collect data associated with crimes motivated by bias.

The resolution cites the Zionsville Town Council and Town of Zionsville support providing protections for all regardless of race, ethnicity, religious beliefs, nationality, gender identity or sexual orientation.

As one of only five states without hate crime legislation, the resolution cites the importance of passing protections now. According to the resolution, legislation should include provisions for law enforcement training and data collection and tracking.

"I'm proud of our Town joining Governor Holcomb and other communities around Indiana in asking our State representatives to draft meaningful bias crimes legislation during their upcoming session," said Town Council President Josh Garrett. "Zionsville is open for business to all and we want to ensure that all residents and visitors feel welcomed, safe and protected in our community. I want to thank our Non-Discriminatory Practices Review Committee for taking the time to write a thoughtful resolution that was discussed and passed by the current Town Council."

In December, Town of Zionsville Non-Discrimination Committee members and Mayor Haak met to discuss support of bias crimes legislation during the 2019 legislative session. The Committee unanimously approved a recommendation to the Town Council for a resolution.

“It’s important that we take a stand against hate and to uphold our reputation that Zionsville is a welcoming community for all residents, visitors and businesses,” said Mayor Haak. “The executive order and resolution send a strong message that something needs to get done in the next legislative session.”

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