



The Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues

The Honorable Mark Warner
United States Senate
703 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Tim Kaine
United States Senate
231 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Cory Gardner
United States Senate
354 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Johnny Isakson
United States Senate
131 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
United States Senate
522 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Richard Blumenthal
United States Senate
706 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

September 28, 2017

Dear Senators Warner, Kaine, Gardner, Isakson, Murkowski, and Blumenthal,

On behalf of the Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues (SPSSI), we thank you for introducing and advocating for the passage of [S. J. Res. 49](#), which condemns the violence perpetuated in Charlottesville by white supremacists and other hate groups; rejects white supremacy and other hateful expressions of intolerance that are contradictory to the values that define Americans; and urges the Executive Branch to use all available resources to investigate and prosecute acts of hate-based violence and domestic terrorism, improve the collection and reporting of hate crimes, and speak out against hate groups and the messages they seek to advance.

Founded in 1936, SPSSI is an organization of scholars, educators, and students who are deeply invested in using psychological science to benefit society. Our membership includes researchers who study racism, prejudice, intolerance, hate crimes, and terrorism—among other issues—both within and outside of the United States. This scholarship focuses on a variety of vulnerable and/or targeted populations, including groups that have been a target of white supremacists.

Wendy Williams, President Elizabeth Cole, President-Elect Chris Crandall, Past-President Richard Wiener, Secretary-Treasurer

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Katya Migacheva Mary Murphy Luis Rivera Isis Settles Linda Silka Peggy Stockdale Ashley Weinberg Keon West
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Psychological research has been instrumental in explaining how hate groups recruit new members, establish themselves in communities, and identify potential “recruits.” Psychological research has also shed light onto the short- and long-term effects of hearing hate speech and experiencing hate-based violence, and guided what interventions are developed to address such effects and, ideally, prevent hate in the first place. As a community of scholars, we appreciate the Joint Resolution not only on its own merits but also because the ideas contained therein are consistent with what the science shows.

SPSSI members—based out of universities, research institutions, and other organizations—have a deep commitment to conducting and sharing research for the betterment of society. Please contact our Policy Director Sarah Mancoll (E: smancoll@spssi.org, T: 202-675-6956) if we can ever direct you to research and/or expertise on this or other topics.

The United States has a long and painful history of white supremacy and hate-based violence, but it also has a long and revered history of pluralism and progress. As we move forward in the wake of Charlottesville, we urge Congress to remain vigilant and vocal against white supremacy in the hope that pluralism and progress continue to win out.

Sincerely,
Executive Committee, Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues

Wendy Williams, Ph.D.
President

Chris Crandall, Ph.D.
Immediate Past President

Richard Wiener, Ph.D.
Secretary/Treasurer

Tiffany Brannon, Ph.D.
Council-Elected Representative to the Executive Committee