Joint Oversight Hearing
Progress on Addressing Hate Crimes in California

Panelist Biographies

BRIAN LEVIN, ESQ.
Director, Center for the Study of Hate & Extremism, California State University, San Bernardino

Criminologist and civil rights attorney Brian Levin is a professor of criminal justice and director of the Center for the Study of Hate and Extremism at California State University, San Bernardino where he specializes in analysis of hate crime, terrorism and legal issues. A globally cited authority, Levin is the author or co-author of influential Supreme Court briefs, books, scholarly articles, training manuals, and studies on extremism and hate crime.

His real-time trend analysis has aided Congress, state legislatures, scholars, the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, the United Nations and an array of government agencies, scholars, journalists and NGOs. He has appeared in every major American newspaper, newsmagazine and wire service, and has presented his findings and analysis to the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Anti-Semitism, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, the U.S. House of Representative, Committee on Homeland Security, among others.

In recognition of his impactful works, Levin was awarded the highly competitive and prestigious 2020 Wang Family Excellence Award. The award, which comes with a $20,000 gift, recognizes and celebrates California State University faculty members who, through extraordinary commitment and dedication, have distinguished themselves by exemplary contributions and achievements in their academic disciplines.

Levin is a member of the State Bar of California and Supreme Court of the United States, and serves as a board member on both the California Association of Official Human Relations Organizations and the National Coalition for the Homeless. He received his bachelor’s degree with multiple honors in history from the University of Pennsylvania and his juris doctorate is from Stanford Law School, where he was awarded the Block Civil Liberties Award.

ELAINE M. HOWLE, CPA
California State Auditor

For over 19 years, California State Auditor Elaine M. Howle has served the State of California by providing accurate, unbiased, and timely assessments of state and local government entities. Ms. Howle has nearly 36 years of auditing, management, and leadership experience with the California State Auditor’s office and its predecessor office. Under her leadership, the work from her office serves an important role in the State’s system of checks and balances by examining the fiscal health and performance of state and local entities to ensure that government provides the essential services to the public in the most efficient and effective manner.

A trusted voice, Ms. Howle is frequently called upon to provide testimony in legislative hearings and brief members on the results of her office’s work. Her performance audits provide information to improve public accountability and facilitate decision making by parties with responsibility for overseeing or initiating corrective action. Her office conducts the annual financial audit of California’s large, complex
financial system and provides an opinion on the financial statements. Ms. Howle’s office also audits annually the State’s compliance with federal regulations governing the administration of billions of dollars in federal funds California receives each year. Moreover, her office investigates allegations received and reports substantiated claims of fraud and abuse in state government. Further, her office audits and reports on state and local government agencies that it has identified as being at high risk for waste, fraud, abuse, and mismanagement or that have major challenges related to efficiency or effectiveness.

Recognized nationally as a leader in her profession, Ms. Howle has received various awards including the National State Auditors Association’s William R. Snodgrass Distinguished Leadership Award (2016)—an annual award presented to an individual who demonstrates sustained outstanding leadership and contributions to state government auditing. Additionally, the Institute of Internal Auditors’ American Center for Government Auditing honored Ms. Howle as among 2014’s 15 Most Influential Professionals in Government Auditing and she was also named Public Official of the Year by Governing Magazine in November 2012. Further, Ms. Howle received the national David M. Walker Excellence in Government Performance and Accountability Award in June 2012. She is currently the treasurer for the National State Auditors, Comptrollers and Treasurers and serves on the Federal Government Accountability Office, Domestic Accountability Working Group. Additionally, she previously served as the president of the National State Auditors Association in 2013 after having served on the executive committee for 5 years. Further, in 2003 she was asked by the U.S. Comptroller General to serve on his Domestic Accountability Working Group—on which she currently serves. She is also member of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants and the Association of Government Accountants.

Ms. Howle is a certified public accountant and a certified government financial manager. She earned a bachelor's degree in sports management from the University of Massachusetts and a master's of business administration from California State University, Sacramento.

AARON FELLNER
Senior Auditor, California State Auditor

Aaron Fellner has 12 years of experience conducting independent audits with the California State Auditor's Office. Having earned a Master's in Public Policy, from Pepperdine University, Mr. Fellner is currently an audit supervisor with the office. Mr. Fellner has conducted and supervised a wide variety of independent audits of the California Department of Corrections, Los Angeles Unified School District, Judicial Council of California, and California Department of Toxic Substances Control.

CHRISTINE P. SUN
Special Assistant to the Attorney General, California Department of Justice

Christine P. Sun serves as Special Assistant Attorney General working on civil rights, criminal justice reform, and public safety policy, effective September 16, 2019. She is a highly experienced attorney and senior manager with nearly two decades of experience working to promote equality, civil rights, and economic and racial justice across a wide range of intersectional issues. Christine most recently served as the Legal and Policy Director for the ACLU of Northern California, where she oversaw approximately 40 legal and policy staff across three offices. She also served as senior staff attorney for the national ACLU Immigrants’ Rights Project (IRP). While at IRP, her cases included ADAC v. Brewer, a class-action lawsuit challenging Arizona’s denial of drivers’ licenses to DREAMers, and Valle del Sol v. Whiting, the historic
confrontational challenge to Arizona’s S.B. 1070 (the “show me your papers” law). Earlier Christine was Deputy Legal Director at the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC), where she directed SPLC’s economic justice work and work on behalf of the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) community. She has also worked as a litigation associate at Keker Van Nest & Peters in San Francisco, and at Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton in New York. Among several honors, in 2010, Christine was recognized by the National LGBT Bar Association as one of the “Best Lawyers Under 40.” Christine has spoken nationally and internationally on civil rights issues, including at Yale Law School, Harvard Law School, Stanford Law School, and in the Philippines through a program facilitated by the U.S. Department of State. Christine served as a law clerk for civil rights legend federal judge Robert L. Carter, one of the attorneys who argued Brown v. Board of Education. Christine graduated with honors from New York University School of Law, where she was an editor of the NYU Law Review. She received her bachelor’s degree in Political Science from U.C. Berkeley. Christine has bar admissions in California, New York and Tennessee (inactive).

MANUEL ALVAREZ, JR.
Executive Director, Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training

Manuel “Manny” Alvarez was appointed as the Executive Director of Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) on July 26, 2018. Alvarez has spent the majority of his career experiences under the Federal Bureau of Investigation as a Special Agent. Alvarez has served as the California Commission on POST since 2016. The POST Program hopes to enhance the professionalism of CA law enforcement by implementing quality training standards. POST offers a variety of services and benefits to participating agencies, including valuable training programs and technological resources. Through its support of peace officers and law enforcement organizations, POST provides a crucial role in ensuring the safety of the community.

ORLANDO MARTINEZ
Detective Supervisor, Los Angeles Police Department

Orlando Martinez began his 25-year law enforcement career with the Los Angeles Police Department in 1994. He is currently a Detective Supervisor with the Los Angeles Police Department’s Robbery-Homicide Division. He has worked in the gang, Special Problems, Narcotics, and auto theft units. After being promoted to the rank of Detective, he was a homicide detective for over 16 years before being assigned to the role of the LAPD’s Hate Crimes Coordinator. In 2007, he transferred to the elite Robbery Homicide Division which handles high profile murders, murders for hire, serial murders, and murders of Police Officers for the city of Los Angeles. He is a member of the California Homicide Investigator’s Association, California Robbery Investigator’s Association and a California Peace Officers Standards and Training (POST) certified instructor for including the LAPD Gang School, Supervisor School, and Homicide school.