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Supervisor Gordon Mar announces legislation requiring SFPD to report demographic data on crime victims

[San Francisco] On Tuesday, Supervisor Gordon Mar announced legislation in progress to make demographic data and summary reports on the victims of crime publicly available. The legislation would require annual reports of aggregated information on victims’ race, ethnicity, age, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, and religious preference, to help identify trends and instances of communities being targeted in crimes.

“As hate-motivated crimes rise, communities deserve to know if they’re being targeted,” said Mar. “With this data, we can better track these crimes, understand who’s being impacted, and develop better strategies to address them.”

The announcement follows months of focus on public safety concerns by Mar’s office, including a March hearing on package theft and home break-ins and an April town hall on property crime. In addition to the new legislation that would require reporting by the police department, Supervisor Mar and District Attorney candidate and Sunset resident Chesa Boudin previously announced a proposal to create a data dashboard to track and report demographic information of crime victims through the District Attorney’s office, in direct response to the concerns raised at Mar’s hearing and by Sunset residents.

The new legislation is currently being drafted with the City Attorney’s Office, to be introduced in September. Along with the announcement, Mar introduced a letter of inquiry co-sponsored by Supervisor Shamann Walton and President Norman Yee formally requesting SFPD to provide aggregated demographic information about crime victims over the past ten years, ahead of the new legislation taking effect.

“In March, I requested that SFPD provide data on victim demographics at a hearing I called in response to a series of home invasion robberies targeting Chinese families in the Sunset District and other neighborhoods,” said Mar. “Four months later, Chinese
residents and businesses have been victims of many more high profile violent crimes, yet I still haven’t received the information I requested. When we know better, we do better, and it is deeply frustrating that SFPD has not already provided this basic information that can help ensure all communities are safe.”

Hate-motivated crimes overall have surged in the past few years, increasing across the nation for three consecutive years from 2014-2017 according to the FBI. In San Francisco, the surge has been especially dramatic, increasing by 61% from 2017 to 2018. Of 66 official incidents reported in San Francisco, 38 hate crimes were racial or ethnic based, 16 were for sexual orientation, and 9 were for religion. Mar’s legislation will help the City further identify trends in crimes against vulnerable communities, including those that may not rise to the legal definition of a hate crime.