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## **GLAAD Statement for Senate Judiciary Committee Hearing, "A Threat to Justice Everywhere: Stemming the Tide of Hate Crimes in America"**

September 13, 2024

The Honorable Richard J. Durbin  
Chair, Senate Committee on the Judiciary  
224 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Lindsay Graham  
Ranking Member, Senate Committee on the Judiciary  
224 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senators Durbin and Graham, and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of GLAAD, the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) media advocacy nonprofit, we write to thank you for holding this critical hearing addressing hate crimes in the US and also to share our perspective on how these crimes impact the LGBTQ community. GLAAD is dedicated to uplifting the voices of LGBTQ Americans and accelerating acceptance through accurate and inclusive representation in the media. More than 7.6% of US adults and 22.3% of Gen Z are [LGBTQ](#), and we know that hate crimes impacting our community impact *all* Americans.

According to GLAAD's newly released 2024 [Accelerating Acceptance report](#), 89% of non-LGBTQ Americans believe that LGBTQ people (including transgender people) should have the freedom to live their lives and not be discriminated against. And yet, anti-LGBTQ extremists continue to promote inflammatory mischaracterizations of trans health care, baseless false assertions of LGBTQ people and our allies being threats to children, and malicious framings of LGBTQ people and identities as "ideologies" — all as a blatant political strategy for [attacking basic LGBTQ equality and civil rights](#). Such fear-mongering and scapegoating of marginalized groups creates a dangerous environment for everyone.

Against the background of these rhetorical attacks, GLAAD is tracking an alarming rise in hate-fueled violence, harassment and intimidation against LGBTQ people. Our data shows **anti-LGBTQ incidents rose 112%** year-over-year, from June 2022 – 2023 to June 2023 – 2024. This hate tragically resulted in at least 21 deaths and 160+ injuries across the US. Over

30% of the incidents were also specifically motivated by hate targeting transgender and gender non-conforming people. These incidents are the undercurrent to the stories that make national headlines – the mass shooting at [Club Q](#), the tragic deaths of [Lauri Carleton](#), [O’Shae Sibley](#), and [Nex Benedict](#), and the hundreds of bomb threats every year which target drag performances, schools, libraries and health care facilities that offer safe spaces for LGBTQ people.

We also cannot ignore the intersectional nature of hate-fueled violence. The same extremists who seek to harm the LGBTQ community are the very same people who target, among others, Black, Jewish, Muslim, and immigrant communities in the US. Just four days ago, the Department of Justice announced the arrest of two leaders of the [Terrorgram Collective](#) - a transnational white supremacist accelerationist group which solicited group members to [commit attacks](#) including the deadly mass shooting at an [LGBTQ bar](#) in Slovakia, a knife attack near a [mosque](#) in Turkey, and planned attacks on US energy facilities and other “enemies of the white race.” We could tell hundreds of similar stories, from the 2016 shooting at Pulse nightclub that targeted predominantly [LGBTQ Latine people](#), to the disinformation campaigns targeting [LGBTQ Jewish leaders](#), to the epidemic of violence facing [Black trans women and trans women of color](#).

The path to a safer future for all Americans necessitates that we act now to stem the tide of hate crimes and hate-fueled violence. We are committed to uplifting the voices of LGBTQ people and all others impacted by this hate – and we urge you to join us in this fight. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sarah Kate Ellis". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Sarah" being the most prominent.

Sarah Kate Ellis

President & CEO, GLAAD