

1 Introduced by Representative LaLonde of South Burlington
2 Referred to Committee on
3 Date:
4 Subject: Crimes and criminal procedure; hate-motivated crimes
5 Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to expand the
6 scope of hate-motivated crimes to include unlawful conduct directed at a group
7 of particular persons rather than just a singular victim.

8 An act relating to expanding the scope of hate-motivated crimes

9 It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont:

10 Sec. 1. 13 V.S.A. § 1455 is amended to read:

11 § 1455. HATE-MOTIVATED CRIMES

12 (a) A person who commits, causes to be committed, or attempts to commit
13 any crime and whose conduct is motivated, in whole or in part, by ~~the victim's~~
14 another person's or a group of particular persons' actual or perceived
15 membership in a protected category shall be subject to the following penalties:

16 (1) If the maximum penalty for the underlying crime is one year or less,
17 the penalty for a violation of this section shall be imprisonment for not more
18 than two years or a fine of not more than \$2,000.00, or both.

19 (2) If the maximum penalty for the underlying crime is more than one
20 year but less than five years, the penalty for a violation of this section shall be

1 imprisonment for not more than five years or a fine of not more than
2 \$10,000.00, or both.

3 (3) If the maximum penalty for the underlying crime is five years or
4 more, the penalty for the underlying crime shall apply; however, the court shall
5 consider the motivation of the defendant as a factor in sentencing.

6 (b) ~~The victim's~~ A person's or a group of particular persons' actual or
7 perceived membership in a protected category or categories need not be the
8 predominant reason or the sole reason for the defendant's conduct.

9 (c) As used in this section, "protected category" includes race, color,
10 religion, national origin, sex, ancestry, age, service in the U.S. Armed Forces
11 or the National Guard, disability as defined by 21 V.S.A. § 495d(5), sexual
12 orientation, gender identity, and perceived membership in any such group.

13 Sec. 2. EFFECTIVE DATE

14 This act shall take effect on July 1, 2025.