



New York State Commission for Social Justice

Order Sons of Italy in America

2101 Bellmore Avenue • Bellmore, New York 11710
(516) 785-4623 • (800) 322-OSIA • FAX (516) 221-OSIA
www.nyscsj.org

John A. Fratta
CSJ Chairman

Anthony Naccarato
State President

June 17, 2020

Attorney General Latitia James
NYS Office of the Attorney General
The Capitol
Albany, New York 12224-0341

Dear Attorney General James,

The New York Commission for Social Justice is the anti-defamation arm of the New York Grand Lodge, Order Sons and Daughters of Italy in America. The Commission has, throughout the years, engaged in a wide variety of activities geared toward accomplishing its twin goals of promoting a positive image of Italian Americans and fighting bias, bigotry, and defamation.

We are very disappointed that you as the Attorney General of New York, would ignore our January 30, 2020 letter (attached) requesting that vandalizing a statue of Christopher Columbus be considered a hate crime in New York.

As you can see these statues, which are especially important to our Italian American heritage, are constantly being vandalized. No other ethnic or racial group would tolerate this, and neither do we. These crimes clearly fall under the hate crime statute of New York and should be prosecuted as such. It seems that it is now acceptable to vandalize a statue or a monument promoting pride for Italian Americans without any repercussions. If that is the case, no group will be able to show their pride and heritage in New York State. We strongly believe that these crimes should be given the same protection as those celebrating African Americans, Latinos, Asians, Gay New Yorkers, or any other group in our State that makes New York this great mosaic. We are asking that you support making vandalizing a statue of Christopher Columbus a hate crime.

We are once again hoping to hear from you on this matter, and are willing to meet with you, or your staff on this important issue.

Sincerely,

Anthony Naccarato

Anthony Naccarato, President
Grand Lodge of New York, OSDIA

John A. Fratta

John A. Fratta, Chairman
NYS Commission for Social Justice