



March 11, 2020

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker of the House  
H-232, The Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy  
Republican Leader of the House of Representatives  
H-204, The Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi and Minority Leader McCarthy:

On behalf of the National Council of Asian Pacific Americans (NCAPA), and the undersigned organizations, we urge you to call for unity, and publicly denounce the increase in racist attacks and discrimination against the Asian American community, in the wake of rising concerns over the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19).

We have witnessed with increasing alarm, incidents all over the country targeting the Asian American community in connection to COVID-19. For example, in San Fernando, CA, a 16-year old Asian American boy was physically attacked at school because he was accused of having the coronavirus.<sup>1</sup> In Plymouth, IN, two Hmong men were denied service at hotels under the false assumption that they were Chinese and carrying the coronavirus. In New York, a woman wearing a facemask, who was believed to be Asian, was physically and verbally assaulted in a subway station.<sup>2</sup>

In communities across the nation, Asian American businesses are seeing a significant decline in

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<sup>1</sup> CBS News. (2020, February 14). Bullies attack Asian American teen at school, accusing him of having coronavirus. Retrieved from <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/coronavirus-bullies-attack-asian-teen-los-angeles-accusing-him-of-having-coronavirus/>

<sup>2</sup> CNN. (2020, February 21). What's spreading faster than coronavirus in the US? Racist assaults and ignorant attacks against Asians. Retrieved from <https://www.cnn.com/2020/02/20/us/coronavirus-racist-attacks-against-asian-americans/index.html>



customers, as fear of a viral outbreak spreads globally.<sup>3</sup> Even some businesses that have been long-established fixtures within their communities, have suffered a 70% to 80% loss of business.<sup>4</sup> Other businesses, many in major U.S. cities, are considering closing after hearing false rumors of people getting sick. This economic impact is also taking a toll on the families that own these businesses as well.<sup>5</sup> Moreover, Asian Americans are facing discrimination in their workplaces. Workers in retail, hospitality, and healthcare sectors are hearing about customers and patients requesting to interact with "non-Asian" staff. As Asian-American shift workers become targets of discrimination, they risk losing income from less shifts scheduled.

The stigma associated with COVID-19 originating in China leads some to assume that any person of perceived Asian ancestry might be sick, harming Asian American communities all over the country. Local efforts to curb xenophobia, like city officials reminding the public that it is safe to visit their local Chinatown are helpful, but we believe more needs to be done.

On February 26, 2020, the members of the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus (CAPAC) circulated a letter to Members of Congress, urging them to help stop the spread of xenophobia and misinformation by only sharing confirmed and verifiable information pertaining to COVID-19, how it spreads, and how Americans should protect themselves. We call on you to do the same. In the face of this growing threat, the American people need to hear from leaders such as yourselves, that we must face these circumstances together, rather than allow fear and misinformation to divide us.

While we recognize the growing public health and economic threat the virus poses, our nation must come together during this difficult time. We need leadership grounded in truth and committed to taking on racism and xenophobia directly. We urge House and Senate leadership to take tangible steps to counter the hysteria around the novel coronavirus, such as passing a joint resolution denouncing the racism, xenophobia, and misinformation surrounding it. We ask that you act swiftly to ensure that violent racism and economic loss, rooted in fear and

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<sup>3</sup> PBS News Hour. (2020, February 18). Misinformation on novel coronavirus impacting Asian American businesses. Retrieved from <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/health/misguided-virus-fears-hitting-asian-american-businesses>

<sup>4</sup> CNN. (2020, February 21). What's spreading faster than coronavirus in the US? Racist assaults and ignorant attacks against Asians. Retrieved from <https://www.cnn.com/2020/02/20/us/coronavirus-racist-attacks-against-asian-americans/index.html>

<sup>5</sup> PBS News Hour. (2020, February 18). Misinformation on novel coronavirus impacting Asian American businesses. Retrieved from <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/health/misguided-virus-fears-hitting-asian-american-businesses>



misinformation is mitigated.

We thank you for your leadership during this time of uncertainty and stand ready to do our part in fighting back racism.

Sincerely,

Gregg Orton

National Director, National Council of Asian Pacific Americans

cc: The Honorable Judy Chu, Member of Congress, Chair of the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus

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9to5

A. Philip Randolph Institute

ACCESS

Adhikaar

Advancement Project National Office

Alaska Federation of Natives

American Association of People with Disabilities

American Federation of Teachers

American Humanist Association

Anti-Defamation League

APANO

Apicha Community Health Center

Arab American Institute (AAI)

Arizona Asian American Bar Association

Arkansas Coalition of Marshallese

Asia Services in Action, Inc.

Asian & Pacific Islander American Health Forum

Asian American Alliance

Asian American Bar Association of Greater Chicago

Asian American Bar Association of Houston

Asian American Bar Association of New York

Asian American Bar Association of Ohio

Asian American Federation of Florida - South Region

Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund (AALDEF)



Asian American Medical Group  
Asian American Organizing Project  
Asian American Psychological Association  
Asian American Society of Central Virginia  
Asian Americans Advancing Justice - Los Angeles  
Asian Americans Advancing Justice | AAJC  
Asian Americans United  
Asian and Pacific Islander American Vote (APIAVote)  
Asian and Pacific Islander American Vote (APIAVote) - MI  
Asian Center - Southeast Michigan  
Asian Chamber Inc.  
Asian Community Outreach  
Asian Counseling and Referral Service  
Asian Culture and Education Society USA  
Asian Health Coalition  
Asian Law Alliance  
Asian Pacific American Bar Association of Central Ohio  
Asian Pacific American Bar Association of Pennsylvania (APABA-PA)  
Asian Pacific American Chamber of Commerce (APACC)  
Asian Pacific American Institute for Congressional Studies (APAICS)  
Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance, AFL-CIO  
Asian Pacific Community in Action  
Asian Pacific Development Center  
Asian Pacific Islander American Political Action - Greater Fremont Chapter  
Asian Pacific Islander American Public Affairs Association (APAPA)  
Asian Pacific Islander American Public Affairs Association (APAPA), Davis Chapter  
Asian Pacific Islander American Public Affairs Association (APAPA), Los Angeles Chapter  
Asian Pacific Islander American Public Affairs Association (APAPA), New York Chapter  
Asian Pacific Islander American Public Affairs Association (APAPA), Ohio Chapter  
Asian Pacific Islander American Public Affairs Association (APAPA), Pomona Chapter  
Asian Pacific Islander American Public Affairs Association (APAPA), San Diego Chapter  
Asian Pacific Islander American Public Affairs Association (APAPA), San Gabriel Valley Chapter  
Asian Pacific Islander American Public Affairs Association (APAPA), Texas Chapter  
Asian Pacific Islander American Public Affairs Association (APAPA), Tri Valley Chapter  
Asian Pacific Islanders Civic Action Network  
Asian Pacific Partners for Empowerment, Advocacy and Leadership (APPEAL)  
Asian Real Estate Association of America  
Asian Student Union at the University of Virginia  
Asian Women for Health, Inc  
Asian/Pacific Bar Association of Sacramento



Asian/Pacific Islander Caucus, Iowa Democratic Party  
AsiaTown Cleveland  
Association of Asian Pacific Community Health Organizations  
Association of Chinese Americans, Inc.  
Association of University Centers on Disabilities (AUCD)  
Austin Asian American Bar Association  
Autistic Self Advocacy Network  
Baltimore Asian Resistance in Solidarity  
Bay Area Legal Aid  
Bend the Arc: Jewish Action  
Boat People SOS Inc.  
Boston Chinatown Neighborhood Center (BCNC)  
California Reinvestment Coalition  
Cambodian Mutual Assistance Association  
Center for Asian American Media  
Center for Justice (Spokane)  
Center for Southeast Asians  
Children's Defense Fund - Texas  
Chinese American Association of Lexington  
Chinese American Bar Association of Greater Chicago  
Chinese Association of Greater Detroit  
Chinese Community Center, Houston  
Chinese Community Healthcare Association  
Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Society  
Chinese Culture Connection, Inc.  
Chinese Progressive Association  
Chinese Progressive Association, Boston  
Cleveland Contemporary Chinese Culture Association  
Community Change/Action  
Community Legal Services in East Palo Alto  
Council of Korean Americans  
Council on Asian Pacific Minnesotans  
Dallas Asian - American Bar Association  
DigitalC  
Disability Rights Education & Defense Fund  
Donaldina Cameron House  
Eastern Michigan University Center for Health Disparities Innovation and Studies  
Empowering Pacific Islander Communities (EPIC)  
End Citizens United  
Equal Justice Society  
Faith in Action National Network



Filipino American Association of Iowa  
Filipino American Lawyers Association of Chicago  
Filipino American Lawyers Association of New York (FALANY)  
Filipino Lawyers of Washington  
First Aid onSite Foundation  
Florida Asian Services  
Florida Asian Women Alliance  
FWHC  
GO2 Foundation for Lung Cancer  
Greater Boston Legal Services Asian Outreach Unit  
Greater Cincinnati Chinese Cultural Exchange Association  
Greater Cleveland Chinese Chamber of Commerce  
Greater Malden Asian American Community Coalition (GMAACC)  
Gum Moon Residence Hall  
Hawaii Health & Harm Reduction Center  
Helping Link  
Hep Free Hawaii  
Hindu American Foundation  
Hispanic Federation  
Hmong National Development  
Human Rights Campaign  
Impact Fund  
Indivisible Iowa  
Interfaith Alliance  
International Community Health Services  
Iowa Asian Alliance  
Iowa Citizen Action Network  
Iowa Lower Drug Prices Now  
Iowa Nepalese Association  
Japanese American Citizens League  
Japanese American Citizens League, Arizona Chapter  
Korean American Cultural Center  
Korean-American Bar Association of Washington, DC (KABA-DC)  
Korean-American Citizens League of NE  
Labor Council for Latin American Advancement  
Lambda Legal  
Lao American Association State of Iowa  
Laotian American National Alliance (LANA)  
Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law  
Lee Family Association of New York  
Legal Aid at Work



Mai Family Services  
Main Street Alliance  
Make the Road Nevada  
Marshallese Educational Initiative  
Matthew Shepard Foundation  
Maui AIDS Foundation  
Michigan Asian Pacific American Affairs Commission  
Michigan Chinese Conservatives Alliance  
Milwaukee Consortium for Hmong, Inc.  
MomsRising/Mamás Con Poder  
MotivAsians for Cleveland  
MoveOn  
Muslim Advocates  
NAACP  
NANAY  
NAPAFASA  
National Asian American Pacific Islanders Mental Health Association  
National Asian Pacific American Bar Association (NAPABA)  
National Asian Pacific American Bar Association (NAPABA), HI  
National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum (NAPAWF)  
National Asian Pacific Center on Aging (NAPCA)  
National Association of Asian American Professionals  
National Association of Asian American Professionals - Detroit Chapter (NAAAPDetroit)  
National CAPACD  
National Center for Learning Disabilities  
National Center for Transgender Equality  
National Coalition for the Homeless  
National Council of Jewish Women  
National Council on Independent Living  
National Employment Law Project  
National Employment Lawyers Association  
National Federation of Filipino American Associations  
National Filipino American Lawyers Association (NFALA)  
National Health Law Program  
National Immigration Law Center  
National Korean American Service & Education Consortium (NAKASEC)  
National Korean American Service & Education Consortium (NAKASEC), Virginia  
National LGBTQ Task Force Action Fund  
National Organization for Women  
National Partnership for Women & Families  
National Queer Asian Pacific Islander Alliance (NQAPIA)



National Tongan American Society  
National Women's Law Center  
Nepali Sahitya Manch USA  
Nevada Chinese Association  
New American Leaders Action Fund  
NICOS Chinese Health Coalition  
NOELA Community Health Center  
North American Chinese Coalition  
North East Medical Services (NEMS)  
OCA - Asian Pacific American Advocates  
OCA - Asian Pacific American Advocates, Greater Chicago Chapter  
OCA - Asian Pacific American Advocates, Greater Cleveland Chapter  
OCA - Asian Pacific American Advocates, Greater Houston Chapter  
OCA - Asian Pacific American Advocates, Pittsburgh Chapter  
OCA - Asian Pacific American Advocates, San Francisco Chapter  
OCA - Asian Pacific American Advocates, South Florida Chapter  
OCA - Asian Pacific American Advocates, Utah Chapter  
OneAmerica  
OPAWL: Building AAPI Feminist Leadership in Ohio  
Orange County Asian American Bar Association  
Pacific Islander Health Board of Washington  
Pacific Islands Primary Care Association  
Pan Asian Lawyers of San Diego  
People For the American Way  
People's Action  
PFLAG National  
Philippine American Bar Association (PABA)  
Philippine American Cultural Center of Michigan  
Philippine American Society of Colorado  
Planned Parenthood Federation of America  
Poligon Education Fund  
Pride at Work  
Public Citizen  
Race Forward  
RAMS, Inc.  
Revere Youth in Action  
Rising Voices of Asian American Families  
River City Science Academy  
Samoan Solutions Inc  
San Francisco Chinese Hospital  
Sikh American Legal Defense and Education Fund (SALDEF)





South Asian Americans Leading Together  
South Asian Bar Association of North America  
South Asian Bar Association of Southern California  
South Asian Workers' Center-Boston  
Southeast Asian Coalition of Central Massachusetts  
SPLC Action Fund  
TASH, Inc.  
Taulama for Tongans  
Thai American Bar Association  
Thai Association of Iowa  
The Chinese Chamber of Commerce of New York  
The Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law  
The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights  
The National Congress of American Indians  
The National Urban League  
Transgender Law Center  
U.T.O.P.I.A. Seattle  
UNAVSA  
UnidosUS  
Union for Reform Judaism  
United Chinese Americans (UCA)  
United We Dream  
Utah Pacific Islander Civic Engagement Coalition  
Vietnamese American Association of Michigan  
Vietnamese American Community of Grand Rapids Michigan  
VN TeamWork, Inc.  
Voices for Progress  
William & Mary Asian & Pacific Islander American Studies  
Win Without War  
Women Employed  
Workplace Fairness  
Worksafe, Inc.  
Wu Yee Children's Services  
YMCA of San Francisco