



March 11, 2020

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader of the United States Senate
S-230, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer
Minority Leader of the United States Senate
S-221, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Majority Leader McConnell and Minority Leader Schumer:

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.¹ 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.²

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

¹ 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-himof-having-coronavirus/>

² 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-againstasian-americans/index.html>



customers, as fear of a viral outbreak spreads globally.³ Even some businesses that have been long-established fixtures within their communities, have suffered a 70% to 80% loss of business.⁴ 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.⁵ 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 misinformation is mitigated.

³ 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>

⁴ 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>

⁵ 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>



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

1973

80-20 United

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