

Statement of
National Korean American Service & Education Consortium (NAKASEC) Network

Submitted to:
The House Judiciary Committee
Subcommittee on the Constitution, Civil Rights, and Civil Liberties

for

Hearing Titled
“Discrimination and Violence Against Asian Americans” on March 18, 2021 at 10:00 AM

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Dear Chairman Cohen, Ranking Member Johnson, and Members of the Subcommittee on the Constitution, Civil Rights, and Civil Liberties of the House Committee on the Judiciary:

The National Korean American Service & Education Consortium (NAKASEC) Network (Chicago, IL, Montgomery County, PA, Northern Virginia, and Houston Area, TX) is pleased to submit this written statement to the Subcommittee on the Constitution, Civil Rights, and Civil Liberties of the U.S. House Committee on the Judiciary for the March 18, 2021 hearing titled “Discrimination and Violence Against Asian Americans.”

Founded in 1994, the National Korean American Service & Education Consortium’s (NAKASEC) mission is to organize Korean and Asian Americans to achieve social, economic, and racial justice. The NAKASEC Network also serves more than 30,000 low-income families across the country through public health and social services, immigration legal services, and housing counseling.

Last night, on March 16, 2021, a terrible tragedy occurred in Atlanta, where a white man shot and killed 8 people, 6 of whom were Asian American and all but one were women. These murders are affecting Asian American communities in painful ways. This past year, Asian Americans have had to protect ourselves and our loved ones from the spread of COVID-19 and the coinciding spread of violence fueled by xenophobia, white supremacy, and systemic racism. **Both sides of the aisle are guilty of perpetuating this, from Trump’s consistent attributions of COVID-19 to China to then candidate and now President Biden’s racist and Orientalist posturing about China as a mythical techno-threat to the U.S. Earlier this month, it was revealed that the U.S. plans to spend \$27.4 billion to establish a network of precision-strike missiles along the Asian coast from Japan to Vietnam and crossing China, the Philippines,**

and Taiwan. A recent Gallup poll reported that 45% of Americans now believe China is the greatest enemy to the U.S., which is more than double the percentage who said so in 2020. **With a government that considers the entirety of Asia as an uniform threat, it is sadly unsurprising to see these manifestations of anti-Asian violence here in the U.S.**

Sexual exploitation and misogyny, intertwined with racism, resulted in a white man dehumanizing Asian women as “temptations” and objects to eliminate. This harkens to a long history of fetishizing women of Asian heritage as submissive, feminine, and sexually compliant, and the proliferation of sex industries around U.S. military bases in Asian countries. Southeast Asian communities have long highlighted the incredible violence against children, women, and gender-nonconforming folk forced into the global sex industry.

This mass shooting is also part of a larger story of marginalized communities terrorized by hate-fueled violence. We grieve these deaths as we do the ongoing police murders of Black people like Breonna Taylor and George Floyd, the 23 Latinx community members in El Paso, Texas, the 9 Black community members in Charleston, South Carolina, the 11 Jewish American community members in Pittsburgh, PA and the mostly Latinx and LGBTQ community members in Orlando, Florida.

These individual attacks are not the only violence that Asian Americans are facing. This past Monday, 33 Vietnamese Americans were deported. There are 11 million undocumented immigrants, including 1.7 million Asian Americans, who are forced to live in the shadows. Thousands of intercountry adoptees, over half of which are of Asian heritage, are undocumented despite being adopted by U.S. citizens. **This is state violence, in the form of deportations and refusal to recognize one’s belonging to a country.**

We call on Congress to immediately legislate a pathway to citizenship for the 11 million undocumented immigrants and permanently end detentions and deportations. We also call on the Biden administration to stop all the ways it perpetuates anti-Asian hatred, from its billion dollar anti-Asia missile network to its racist foreign policy rhetoric. We demand that our federal, state, and local governments invest in sustained programming for mental health, legal, employment, and immigration services to immigrants, women, and communities of color. It is critical that programming be led and provided by linguistically and culturally competent members of the communities served to ensure that vulnerable communities are met where their needs are.

The National Korean American Service & Education Consortium (NAKASEC) Network thanks the Subcommittee on the Constitution, Civil Rights, and Civil Liberties for bringing attention to

harm that Asian American communities have been experiencing during this pandemic and for holding this hearing. We urge members of this subcommittee to bear in mind that racism and discrimination against Asian Americans did not begin with the start of the pandemic and without decisive, structural change, will persist long after the pandemic's end. Additionally, we hope you will continue to use the power of this subcommittee to address the specific needs of not only Asian Americans but also Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islanders and all other communities of color that have borne the brunt of the pandemic and of centuries of racism and violence.

Sincerely,

National Korean American Service & Education Consortium (NAKASEC)