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PRESS RELEASE

Joint Statement of Asian American and Pacific Islander Leaders and Over 260 Civil Rights Organizations Call on Congress to Denounce Anti-Asian Racism around COVID-19

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WASHINGTON, March 11, 2020— As cases of COVID-19 (Coronavirus) continue to rise in the U.S., so too do incidents of anti-Asian racism towards **Asian American** families and businesses. As of March 10, there have been more than 110,000 cases worldwide, **1000 of which are in the U.S.** NCAPA, along with over 260 organizations, sent a letter to House and Senate leadership to call for unity and publicly denounce the racist and xenophobic attacks on Asian Americans. A link to the letter can be found [here](#):

The National Council of Asian Pacific Americans (NCAPA) issued the following statement:

“While we recognize and are grateful for the leadership of the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus, and others in Congress to relieve the fear and anxiety the coronavirus has created for all Americans, it has become clear that Congressional leadership should follow their example and do more. Our country needs unified, visible and strong leadership to address the growing hostile rhetoric against the Asian American community.

This letter is a call to action from the civil rights community to hold Congress accountable and help bring our country together, while not letting fear and misinformation divide us. We urge House and Senate leadership to lead by example, and resist stoking fear and xenophobia, while taking tangible steps to demonstrate that our country’s leaders are committed to standing against racism.”

Jeffrey Caballero, Executive Director of the Association of Asian Pacific Community Health Organizations:

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we urge health care providers and all individuals sharing information about the disease to combat misinformation and discrimination that put patients and broader communities at risk. We urge common sense, such as following practical safeguards as recommended by the CDC and your local and state public health departments. This is a global emergency that should be met with both urgency and also cultural awareness that COVID-19 is not isolated to a single ethnic population. Xenophobic attacks and discrimination towards Asian American communities are unacceptable and will not make our families safer or healthier.”

Kathy Ko Chin, President and CEO, Asian & Pacific Islander American Health Forum:

“As a country, we need to be vigilant in heeding the guidance of our public health officials and make sure that information is available in as many languages as possible so all our communities are equally well informed. We must come together during this uncertain time, care for our neighbors and exercise common sense. Let’s be clear, viruses don’t discriminate – and fear, ignorance and racism will not make our communities safer.”

John C. Yang, President and Executive Director, Asian Americans Advancing Justice | AAJC:

“The discriminatory sentiment and instances of violent attacks aimed at Asian Americans is unacceptable, but unfortunately nothing new. We thank CAPAC for their response and urge other elected officials and the media to dispel misinformation around COVID-19. We encourage allies to take action by reiterating the correct information

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Together, we must combat xenophobia.”

Alvina Yeh, Executive Director of the Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance, AFL-CIO:

“Over 2 million AAPIs work in healthcare, transportation and service industries—these workers are on the frontlines of the COVID-19 outbreak and yet they are facing xenophobic and racial discrimination in the workplace in addition to increased exposure to communicable diseases. Our nation’s public health plan must prioritize protecting these workers and that includes guaranteeing paid sick leave and adequate health insurance coverage. It’s imperative that we take care of the workers who are taking care of our communities.”

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