



## ASSOCIATION OF AMERICAN INDIAN PHYSICIANS

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AAIP stands in solidarity with health professionals everywhere denouncing hate crimes. At this moment in particular, we protest the on-going verbal and physical attacks on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, prompted and exacerbated by national anti-Asian racist sentiment and rhetoric from government leaders.

Asian Americans, instrumental in building this country's early infrastructure, have faced discrimination from the 1850s when Chinese people first immigrated to the United States. They have been treated as outsiders and have long experienced racially motivated violent attacks such as the 1871 LA massacre of 20 Chinese Americans. In 2019, the FBI recorded 158 hate crimes against people of Asian descent in the United States. The Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 and the internment of thousands of Japanese Americans during WWII demonstrate our government's historical role in the discrimination against Asian Americans in the United States.

Government leaders have an opportunity to change the rhetoric and affect the treatment of Asian American and Pacific Islanders. President Biden has begun this process with his memo condemning inflammatory and xenophobic rhetoric against Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders and by calling on the attorney general to explore opportunities to combat hate crimes. Legislators have proposed several laws including the COVID-19 Hate Crimes Act introduced by Senator Mazie Hirono (D-HI) and Representative Grace Meng (D-N.Y.) to deter hate crimes and violence directed at Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders.

To address racism in health, Congresswoman Ayanna Pressley (D-MA 7), Senator Elizabeth Warren (D-MA) and Congresswoman Barbara Lee (D-CA 13), introduced the Anti-Racism in Public Health Act.

AAIP calls on health and government leaders to support these legislative proposals and to continue discussions on hate crimes and all forms of discrimination. We also call on our leaders to change the discourse around COVID 19 from blame and hatred to one that builds community and seeks solutions.

Mary J. Owen, MD  
President, AAIP