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**California API Legislative Caucus Leadership Applauds President Biden's Executive Order to Protect API Community from Hate Crimes, Xenophobia**

**SACRAMENTO** — Leadership of the California Asian & Pacific Islander (API) Legislative Caucus on Tuesday applauded President Biden's executive order to combat xenophobia, racism and hate crimes against the API community.

The order acknowledges "long-standing and unacceptable" bullying and discrimination against Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, as well as a dramatic increase in violence and harassment since the beginning of the pandemic. The Biden Administration has instructed the Department of Health and Human Services — in coordination with the COVID-19 Health Equity Task Force — to consider issuing guidance for best practices in advance cultural competency, language access, and sensitivity toward the API community in the federal government's COVID-19 response.

Additionally, the U.S. Department of Justice also will be directed to partner with API communities to prevent hate crimes and harassment.

Dr. Richard Pan, Senator and Chair of the California API Legislative Caucus, expressed his gratitude to President Biden for recognizing of the struggles of the API community.

"Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders have long struggled against hate and racism, a struggle heightened during the pandemic as the coronavirus was improperly called the 'China virus' and 'kung flu' intentionally by some leaders. Violence against API spiked, and API businesses disproportionately suffered," said Dr. Pan. "I am grateful our President recognizes that Americans must vigorously oppose the hate and xenophobia targeting the API community."

Assemblymember Evan Low (D-Silicon Valley), who serves as Vice Chair of the API Legislative Caucus, thanked President Biden for making this order one of his top priorities since taking office on Jan. 20.

"I want to thank President Biden for this vital executive order to combat the rise of xenophobia and racism against Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders," Assemblymember Low said. "Attacks against the API community are too often an afterthought when we talk about racism in this country, but we've seen a devastating increase in violence against the API community during the pandemic. It's vital that we rally together, regardless of our background, to confront these hate crimes in order to heal and move forward as one nation."