



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 18, 2021

CONTACT:

Josh Koehn

Josh.Koehn@asm.ca.gov

California Legislative Diversity Caucuses Take Stand in Condemning Anti-API Hate Crimes

SACRAMENTO, CA — The California Legislative Diversity Caucuses — the Asian Pacific Islander (API) Legislative Caucus, the California Legislative LGBTQ Caucus, the California Legislative Black Caucus, the California Latino Legislative Caucus, California Legislative Jewish Caucus, and the California Legislative Women’s Caucus — joined forces Thursday to condemn the shootings targeting Atlanta massage parlors and take a stand in solidarity against the rise in anti-API hate crimes.

On March 16, a white man targeted three Asian-owned massage parlors in Atlanta, murdering eight people, six of whom were Asian American women. Since the start of the pandemic, the Stop AAPI Hate reporting center has received nearly 3,800 incidents of discrimination and anti-API attacks nationwide. The elderly and women are more likely to be targeted in these attacks, with women reporting violence and incidents of discrimination 2.3 times more often than men.

Almost half of the anti-API attacks have occurred in California. So far in 2021, more than 500 reports of anti-API discrimination have occurred in the Bay Area.

The California Legislative Diversity Caucuses stand in solidarity with the API community. We offer our condolences and support to the families and friends of the victims of the horrific murders in Atlanta. The Caucuses will continue to call attention to and fight back against these acts inspired by hate.

“I am proud to be joined by my colleagues in the Legislative Caucuses to stand against hatred and bigotry,” said **Senator Richard Pan (D-Sacramento), Chair of the API Legislative Caucus**. “Hate and violence have been directed against the Asian Pacific Islander community in America since the 1800s and our community has too often been made invisible and silent in our own country. We must end this racism, violence, and discrimination that plagues our societies, but this can only be accomplished if we do it together. Thank you for your strength and solidarity. Together we will defeat hate.”

“We know that Asian and Pacific Islander Americans have been consistently stereotyped throughout history as other, or exotic, or even submissive to the point that some think we will not fight back when targeted. This is a false and dangerous assumption. These despicable attacks against the API community — inspired by hatred and a lack of empathy for our most vulnerable citizens — will not be tolerated,” said **Assemblymember Evan Low (D-Silicon Valley), who serves as Chair of the LGBTQ Legislative Caucus and Vice Chair of the API Legislative Caucus.** “We will fight back with our words and deeds, creating a path to peace, justice, and progress, fueled by solidarity and a love for all of our fellow Americans. I want to thank my colleagues in the Diversity Caucuses for their allyship and compassion during this dark chapter of American history.”

“From the Chinese Exclusion Act to the Japanese internment camps in our very own backyard here in California, the Asian American community has continued to bare the brunt of this country’s shameful history with xenophobia and discrimination,” said **Senator Steven Bradford (D-Gardena), Chair of the California Legislative Black Caucus.** Since the beginning of the pandemic, the former President intentionally weaponized the virus against the Asian American community, disseminating misinformation and lies, which has led to the escalation in hate violence we are witnessing today. The uptick in violence and hatred against the Asian American community is devastating and unacceptable. On behalf of the California Legislative Black Caucus, we extend our deepest condolences to the families of the eight individuals tragically killed in Atlanta. To our friends, colleagues and neighbors in the Asian American community, we hear you and we stand in solidarity with you.”

“I am sickened, saddened, and angered by Tuesday’s domestic terrorist attack in Atlanta. We all must stand with our Asian American families, against this increasingly deadly hate that is on the rise across the country. The Latino community has had its own struggles against hate and violence over the years, and the Asian American community has always been there in solidarity with us. The California Latino Legislative Caucus of 29 legislators stands strong on their behalf, shoulder to shoulder. We also urge others to speak out publicly. This has to stop now,” said **Senator María Elena Durazo (D-Los Angeles), Chair of the California Latino Legislative Caucus.**

“The Jewish Caucus is heartbroken by the horrific attacks in Atlanta and stands in strong solidarity with our friends in the API Legislative Caucus and the entire API community during this difficult time,” said **Assemblymember Jesse Gabriel (D-Encino), Chair of the California Legislative Jewish Caucus.** “As Jews, we are acutely aware of the destructive power of hate. As Californians, we are outraged by the ugly bigotry and senseless violence that has been directed against our API friends and neighbors. The surge in violence against the API community is a crisis that demands a swift and forceful response. We cannot and will not stand idly by.”

“Heart broken by the shootings at the massage parlors in Atlanta, Ga. Our API brothers and sisters continue to be senselessly targeted simply for being,” said **Assemblywoman Cristina Garcia (D-Bell Gardens), Chair of the California Legislative Women’s Caucus.** “It troubles me that the victims’ intersectionality, specifically gender, is being used to ignore the fact that people of Asian descent were clearly targeted. If we are truly committed to ending hate crimes, we need to call this what it is, a blatant hate crime against our Asian sisters, period.”

###

The California Asian Pacific Islander Legislative Caucus represents and advocates for the interests of the diverse API communities throughout California. It seeks to increase Asian Pacific Islander participation and representation in all levels of government.

Website of the California API Legislative Caucus: <http://apicaucus.legislature.ca.gov>