

CHAIR:
ASSEMBLYMEMBER DAVID CHIU
VICE CHAIR:
ASSEMBLYMEMBER AL MURATSUCHI
SENATOR RICHARD PAN
PARLIAMENTARIAN:
ASSEMBLYMEMBER ASH KALRA



MEMBERS:
ASSEMBLYMEMBER ROB BONTA
ASSEMBLYMEMBER ED CHAU
ASSEMBLYMEMBER KANSEN CHU
ASSEMBLYMEMBER TODD GLORIA
ASSEMBLYMEMBER EVAN LOW
ASSEMBLYMEMBER ADRIN NAZARIAN
ASSEMBLYMEMBER PHILIP Y. TING

July 13, 2020

Governor Gavin Newsom
Office of the Governor
State Capitol, First Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Governor Newsom:

On behalf of the Asian Pacific Islander Legislative Caucus, I write to share concerns regarding the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders in California and request your assistance in addressing these disparities. Our caucus supports the recommendations made by the Asian American and Native Hawaiian Pacific Islander COVID-19 Policy and Research Team, National Pacific Islander COVID-19 Response Team and the NHPI COVID-19 Resource Team in their letter to you dated July 9, 2020.

These teams are comprised of the foremost health providers, researchers and advocates in our Asian American (AA), Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander (NHPI) communities. They are experts in their field whose experience serving patients, analyzing data and providing services in our communities are invaluable to understanding challenges during the pandemic. Their research highlights that Asian Americans in certain parts of California, including San Francisco, have higher COVID-19 death to case ratios. However, there are some issues with the data that prevents these experts from learning more, and doing more, about the health and social impact of COVID-19 in AA and NHPI communities. This includes missing data on testing and the misclassification of AAs and NHPIs.

We urge you to consider the following recommendations:

- Ensure that race/ethnicity and primary language data is based on client self-identification of race/ethnicity and primary language using guidelines from the Institute of Medicine as a minimum standard to classify individuals by the six Office of Management and Budget (OMB) racial/ethnic reporting categories.
- Collect data on primary language spoken by impacted individuals to improve community engagement, prevention, testing, treatment, contact tracing and vaccination.
- Immediately implement race and ethnicity categories as prescribed in AB 1726 (2016) to collect disaggregated public health data related to COVID-19.

We appreciate your consideration of our concerns and recommendations. Please contact Cat Nou, Chief Consultant to the Asian Pacific Islander Legislative Caucus, at cat.nou@asm.ca.gov should you have any questions.

Sincerely,

DAVID CHIU
Assemblymember, 17th AD
Chair, API Legislative Caucus