

March 25, 2021

Senator Charles Schumer
Majority Leader, U.S. Senate
Hart Senate Office Building SH-322
Washington, DC 20510

Speaker Nancy Pelosi
U.S. House of Representatives
Longworth House Office Building 1236
Washington, DC 20515

Senator Mitch McConnell
U.S. Senate
Russell Senate Office Building SR-317
Washington, DC 20510

Representative Kevin McCarthy
U.S. House of Representatives
Rayburn House Office Building 2468
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Majority Leader Schumer, Leader McConnell, Speaker Pelosi, and Leader McCarthy:

We join as representatives of Jewish American communal organizations to urge our elected leaders to speak out in solidarity with the Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) communities.

Bias, hate and racism against Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders have skyrocketed across the country during the COVID-19 crisis. From March 2020 to February 2021 there were approximately 3,800 incidents of hate reported to the Stop AAPI Hate reporting center, likely only a fraction of what the community experienced. The recent massacre in Atlanta that left eight people dead, including six Asian women, was just one horrifying example that has galvanized national attention.

As a community familiar with antisemitism, harassment, hate and scapegoating, we stand in unity with our Asian American and Pacific Islander friends. For the many in our own Jewish communities who are Asian American, this racism and discrimination is personally traumatizing. There is no time to waste, and thus, even as we appreciate Congressional attention to this alarming trend, we believe it is critical for Congress to pass strong bi-partisan legislation to help address hate crimes – against all communities.

We know from research and experience the importance of supporting local communities and providing better tools for federal law enforcement to collect state and local hate crimes data. Localities, in turn, would benefit from federal support to help prevent such crimes and help victims and local communities. That is why we have supported the National Opposition to Hate, Assault, and Threats to Equality (NO HATE) Act in the past, and why we urge Congress to act this year in a bipartisan fashion to pass legislation that provides resources and tools law enforcement needs to protect communities facing such assaults.

You can count on us in the Jewish community to work with you on these efforts. If you would like more information, please contact Darcy Hirsh, Director of Government Affairs at The Jewish Federations of North America at Darcy.Hirsh@Jewishfederations.org, Julie Rayman, the American Jewish Committee's Senior Director of Policy and Political Affairs at raymanj@ajc.org, and Erin Hustings, Director of Government Relations at the Anti-Defamation League at ehustings@adl.org. Thank you for your support and recognition of this critical issue.

Sincerely,

Ameinu

American Jewish Committee

Anti-Defamation League

Be'chol Lashon

B'nai B'rith International

Dimensions EDC

Hadassah, The Women's Zionist Organization of America, Inc.

Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society

JCC Association of North America

Jewish Council for Public Affairs

Jewish Labor Committee

Jewish Multiracial Network

Jewish Women International

Jewish World Watch

Jews in ALL Hues

J Street

Khazbar

MAZON: A Jewish Response to Hunger

Mitsui Collective

Moving Traditions

National Association of Jewish Legislators

National Council of Jewish Women

Network of Jewish Human Service Agencies

Rabbinical Assembly

Reconstructing Judaism

Shalom Bayit

The Jewish Federations of North America

The Workers Circle

Tivnu: Building Justice

T'ruah

Union for Reform Judaism

Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations of America

United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism

Zionist Organization of America