

Statement by the Federal Bar Association-Los Angeles Chapter Condemning Attacks on Members of The Asian American Pacific Islander Community

The Los Angeles Chapter of the Federal Bar Association (FBA-LA) joins with the Los Angeles and San Diego United States Attorneys and their FBI Special Agents in Charge to condemn hate crimes and racism targeting members of the Asian American Pacific Islander (AAPI) Community.

There has been a marked increase in attacks against members of the AAPI community since the onset of the global pandemic. The most recent events, including beatings around the country and the shooting tragedy that unfolded in Atlanta, are reflective of a dangerous undercurrent of anti-Asian sentiment. These repugnant acts have targeted members of our community because of their race. This is wrong.

Unfortunately, there is a history of racist discrimination against Asians in this country. The latest acts of violence against the AAPI community did not occur in isolation or without larger historical and social contexts of invidious discrimination under color of federal and state laws. The upholding of the Chinese Exclusion Act by the United States Supreme Court in the 19th century and the imprisonment of Japanese Americans during World War II are but two examples. It is important that we not only prevent physical violence, but that we stay vigilant and counteract racial discrimination in any form.

Los Angeles County is home to one of the nation's largest Asian populations, many of whom serve our country, serve as healthcare providers and front-line workers who risk their own well-being to care for others, and serve our collective interest in many ways. Our communities are enriched by the diversity of the AAPI community and their rich traditions and perspectives. The Federal Bar Association-Los Angeles Chapter remains committed to upholding the legal rights of AAPI persons and others, and ensuring that each person can live freely and without fear or discrimination.

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Los Angeles U.S. Attorney link: <https://www.justice.gov/usao-cdca/pr/top-federal-prosecutor-los-angeles-and-head-fbi-field-office-denounce-hate-crimes-and>

San Diego U.S. Attorney link: <https://www.justice.gov/usao-sdca/pr/san-diego-law-enforcement-leaders-condemn-anti-asian-hate-crimes>

In response to these anti-Asian hate crimes and incidents, the FBA-LA Chapter is planning a webinar during Asian Pacific American Heritage Month in May to examine possible solutions on the Federal level. The webinar will include, among other things, an analysis of President Biden's January 26, 2021, Executive Memorandum and pending Federal legislation (including HRes. 151, re-introduced by New York Congresswoman Grace Meng). Panelists will include Ronald Cheng, Assistant U.S. Attorney, Chief, Criminal Division, U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Nevada. This special webinar will be moderated by Central District Judge, the Honorable Dolly M. Gee. Details to come at <http://www.fbala.org/Events.php>.

The Los Angeles Chapter of the Federal Bar Association issues this statement in its name only and not that of the Federal Bar Association, any judicial member of the Association, or any other member of the Association for whom participation in the formulation of the position would conflict with that member's official or other professional responsibilities.

This statement was authorized by the attorneys serving on the Board of Directors of the Los Angeles Chapter of the Federal Bar Association. Members of the Judiciary and employees of the US Government, including the US Attorney's Office and Federal Public Defender's office who serve on the Board did not participate in the decision to issue this statement. The FBA LA Chapter seeks to promote the sound administration of justice and the integrity, quality and independence of the federal judiciary. See <http://www.fbala.org/>