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**PRESS STATEMENT**

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## **Asian American Pacific Islander (AAPI) Civil Rights Organizations Establishes STOP AAPI HATE Reporting Center**

San Francisco, California -- In response to the alarming escalation in xenophobia and bigotry resulting from the coronavirus/COVID-19 pandemic, Asian Pacific Planning and Policy Council (A3PCON), Chinese for Affirmative Action (CAA) and San Francisco Asian American Studies Department have launched a reporting center to collect and track incidents of anti-Asian American and Pacific islander hate violence, adult harassment, discrimination, shunning, and child bullying in California and throughout the country. The reporting center will enable individuals who have been directly impacted by or witnessed firsthand this issue to share their stories at [www.a3pcon.org/stopaapihate](http://www.a3pcon.org/stopaapihate).

The lead organizations plan to work with public, private and other community based organizations to develop targeted education and media campaigns, to provide resources for impacted individuals and to advocate for policies and programs dedicated to curtailing racial profiling.

"First and foremost, we want community members to know they are not alone; they can speak out and help stop the spread of bigotry. Secondly, the collected data will allow us to assess the

extent and magnitude of these incidents and to develop strategic interventions,” claims Cynthia Choi, the Co-Executive Director of Chinese for Affirmative Action.

“We are currently providing support to a child who had to go to the emergency room after he was assaulted and accused by bullies of having the coronavirus, and so that tells us we may need to work with schools to address shunning and school bullying but we need to know how widespread it is,” says Manjusha Kulkarni, the Executive Director of A3PCON.

Dr. Russell Jeung, chair and professor of Asian American Studies at San Francisco State University, notes, “Statements by elected officials, such as President Trump labeling COVID-19 as the “Chinese virus,” fuel xenophobia. In our research on news articles, we see that following inflammatory comments, there’s an increase of racist incidents against Asian Americans. Clearly, with such political framing, Asians of different ethnicities are being racially profiled as a foreign threat.”

“We know that many in our Asian American communities are suffering acts of discrimination, hate crimes and microaggressions due to fears of COVID-19. To address what is happening, we need your help. This reporting website will help us create effective policy solutions for long-lasting change with a deeper impact so this doesn’t happen again to our communities or any other community. We appreciate A3PCON, CAA and San Francisco State Asian American Studies Department for their leadership and look forward to continuing to partner with them,” stated Assemblymember David Chiu (D-San Francisco), Chair, California Asian Pacific Islander Legislative Caucus.

Assemblymember Rob Bonta (D-Oakland) added, “I am deeply concerned about the growing anti-Asian American and Pacific Islander hate crimes and discrimination related to COVID-19. This is why the reporting center launched by A3PCON, CAA and San Francisco Asian American Studies is crucially needed at this time,” said Assemblymember Rob Bonta (D-Oakland). “I look forward to partnering with them moving forward to ensure we are using the data of racially motivated incidents to inform state policy and budgetary investments to curtail racial discrimination and harassment.”

“If we are to contain the spread of COVID-19, then we must work together. I represent one of the largest communities of Asian and Pacific Islander Americans in California, and have concerns when COVID-19 is referred to as the ‘Chinese virus. Making such statements can incite racist and xenophobic acts of violence against our fellow citizens, and must be addressed. Let us remember that we are all in this together, and will only overcome this current pandemic by standing united, and not divided, as a state, nation and international community,”said Assemblymember Ed Chau (D-Monterey Park).

“Neither race nor ethnicity caused the coronavirus—and the hate we are seeing towards the API community is not only wrong but it’s dangerous. The Coronavirus affects all of us equally. Defeating this disease demands that we come together as a people and show our strength and resilience,” said Assemblymember Todd Gloria.

Assemblymember Evan Low (D-Silicon Valley) shared “Racist and xenophobic attacks against Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (AAPI) continue to rise as our understanding of the COVID-19 pandemic develops. President Trump calling it a “Chinese virus” will only fuel more bigotry and hate crimes against AAPI. I encourage the community to report incidents of hate crimes they have experienced or witnessed so law enforcement can monitor and address the issue. Our community will not tolerate this bigotry. During times of hardship, we come together and unite against hate.”

“COVID-19 is a public health issue, not a racial one. Calling it a ‘Chinese virus’ only encourages hate crimes and incidents against Asian Americans at a time when communities should be working together to get through this crisis. I encourage victims to confidentially input their encounters on the new reporting site, so we can monitor the situation and provide support to those impacted,” said Assemblymember Phil Ting (D-San Francisco).

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