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**PNAA POSITION STATEMENT**

**RACISM AND VIOLENCE AGAINST ASIAN-AMERICANS**

A wave of harassment and attacks on Asian-Americans increased by 149 percent since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, according to the data published by the Center for the Study of Hate and Extremism. The intentional assault and hate crimes on Asian Americans have been increasing since 2020, with several incidents occurring in areas with high Asian-American population:

- 91 year old Asian American attacked from behind, Oakland CA
- 84 year old Thai American murdered in San Francisco, CA
- 64 year old Vietnamese American woman assaulted in San Jose, CA
- 61 year old Filipino American slashed in the face in New York, NY
- 71 year old Asian woman slugged on the face in the subway, New York, NY
- 64 year old Asian woman assaulted outside a bakery in Flushing, Queens, NY
- 27 year old beaten by attackers shouting "You have the Chinese virus, go back to China in Koreantown, Los Angeles

In New York alone, there were 29 Anti-Asian hate crimes reported in 2020 wherein 24 of those hate crimes were instances of COVID-19 xenophobia according to NYPD. The latest horrific mass shooting into three Asian-American owned massage parlors in Atlanta, Georgia resulted to eight deaths, six of whom are Asian women.

The Philippine Nurses Association of America strongly condemns these acts of violence and hate in all forms against the Asian American community. PNAA as a professional nursing organization comprised of immigrant Filipino nurses with 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> generation members denounces the anti-Asian discrimination that is spreading across the United States. The increase incidents of harassment, verbal or offensive gestures and physical harm resulting in injuries and even deaths are unacceptable.

We are calling Asian-Americans and Pacific Islanders from all ethnic backgrounds to form a coalition to protect each other through increased surveillance and reporting, which would help law enforcement authorities to stop these hate crimes.

PNAA's community work in addressing and reducing health disparities include calling out the effects of systemic racism, unconscious bias, stereotypes and stigma. These key determinants of health disparities are taking an emotional toll and fear amongst Asian-Americans and Pacific Islanders, especially on the elderly population.

PNAA supports the reintroduction of H.R. 6721 Hate Crime requiring a designated official at the Department of Justice to expeditiously review Covid-19 hate crimes and reports of Covid-19 hate crimes. We advocate for the members of the House of Representatives and Senate to end these transgressions and pass legislations to protect Asian-Americans and other minority groups through the following:

1. Quick and thorough investigation of Hate crimes against Asian-Americans, Pacific Islanders (AAPI) and other minority groups.
2. Increased presence of law enforcement officials in communities populated by Asian-Americans.
3. Establish measures to protect witnesses from retaliation.

As an organization comprising 4% or about 150,000 of nurses in U.S. working in the frontlines, let us continue to raise awareness and amplify our voices in protecting our elderly and other vulnerable members of our Asian American community.