

March 24, 2021  
An Open Letter From CASL

Chinese American Service League  
華人諮詢服務處

Dear Neighbors:

**These are scary times to be an Asian American.** We rarely have a day go by without friends, relatives, business associates, and family members hearing racial slurs directed at them. When we hear these hurtful words, many of us fear that these words will escalate to violence.

**Our fears of violence are not artificial;** instead, they are based on hate crimes data. Last week's shooting of six Asian women was not an isolated incident; rather, the truth of the matter is that from 2019 to 2020, reported hate crimes against people of Asian descent rose in the United States by nearly 150%.

**Our political and community leaders' words have a tangible impact on our community's public safety.** In that vein, we extend our most profound appreciation to the elected officials who have reached out to our community, President Biden, Vice President Harris, Governor Pritzker, Mayor Lightfoot, and hundreds of elected officials from throughout our nation.

**The Chinese American Service League will not tolerate any Asian American to be victimized. We recognize that the people who perpetrate these hate crimes do not distinguish between Korean or Chinese, Japanese or Thai, Indian or Filipino, and we must not either.**

We will follow our mission to collaborate with all parties, serve our neighbors, and unite with everyone to address bigotry, hate, and violence. **CASL intends to play a leading role in addressing this crisis** through action, through our support of efforts aimed at fundamental change, and through our partnerships with other communities who've experienced racism and hatred firsthand:

- We will be increasing efforts already underway in our Center for Social Impact, educating our community to recognize harassment and hate crimes, and building a communications channel to support our vibrant community. This outreach that we will continue to build on will work to root out racism, hate, and violence against any member of the Asian American community because an attack on any of us is an attack on us all.
- We are also thankful to the thoughtful legislators who have recently introduced the TEAACH Act in the Illinois General Assembly. This legislation would require that public schools include a unit of instruction in their curriculum studying the events of Asian American history. We are working with legislators from both parties and numerous caucuses to ensure that this critical legislation is passed into law. When passed, Illinois will join California as the only public school system that requires instruction on our history. The TEAACH Act will only become more crucial given that Asian-Americans are our nation's fastest-growing minority.
- We will be proactively working with our Black and Brown neighbors to address racism and violence. Our concerns are their concerns; we care deeply about the broad issues around poverty, systemic inequality, inadequate education, and other disparities.

For more than 40 years, the Chinese American Service League has lived by its mission of collaboration, service, and unity, values that stand true today and will guide us in the future. **We call on all our neighbors to please do their part in supporting Asian American-owned businesses, supporting your Asian colleagues, and supporting Asian American organizations during this challenging time.**

**We are angry, we are in grief, but we are not afraid, and we will not allow these emotions to stifle our community's need to take action.** We know that we are stronger together. With community outreach, education, and collaboration with all our neighbors, we can embrace a new era of tolerance in our community and our nation.

In solidarity,



Paul Luu  
Chinese American Service League, CEO