



March 19, 2021

Dear Governor Cuomo:

We are deeply dismayed with your statement from March 17, 2021. As you say, Governor, “words matter”. Your words and framing reinforce the hateful and racist rhetoric that scapegoats our communities throughout this pandemic. Your words deny the real fear and anger that our community is experiencing right now with the rise of anti-Asian hate and violence. And your words ignore the deep-rooted history of racism Asian Americans have endured for hundreds of years in this country. We expect our leaders to acknowledge our community’s collective trauma, not add to it.

And importantly, your ACTIONS matter, too. Your actions have shown us, time and again, that you are ready to dismiss Asian Americans as a vibrant, diverse set of communities who comprise the backbone of New York and have been on the front lines of supporting all New Yorkers throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

You vetoed a well-supported bill and now drag your feet in committing to support our community voice by collecting critical data on our real and diverse challenges and needs. These improved data-collection measures would have allowed New York to have a more equitable COVID-19 response and vaccination plan.

You have failed to provide language accessible and culturally relevant information on COVID-19 testing, treatment, and vaccines. This has left our communities less safe, and our already under-resourced community organizations to pick up the slack in order to ensure Asian American families have access to public health resources.

And at the same time, you have not prioritized funding for Asian American nonprofit organizations providing culturally competent and language accessible services that are critical to supporting our communities as we face immense trauma from the COVID-19 pandemic, the severe economic fallout we’ve faced exacerbated by xenophobia, as well as the spike in targeted anti-Asian hate and violence.

Governor Cuomo, your words and actions matter. You must STOP FAILING ASIAN AMERICAN NEW YORKERS. You must be accountable to our families and communities.

We DEMAND that you step-up to begin to address this and immediately by supporting the \$19.5 Million budget package in support of Asian American New Yorkers. This budget package is the *first of its kind* in the nation to provide community based services and to support the disaggregation of data that would strengthen the State's response in supporting a very diverse Asian American community:

- 1. Allocate \$15 Million to Asian American community based organizations** to support short-term and long-term solutions to address inequities, support racial healing, and promote relief and recovery.
- 2. Support data disaggregation efforts with \$2.5 Million** within the NY State Department of Health.
- 3. Invest \$2 Million to support in-language public education campaigns** to address COVID-19 and community based resources.

We thank you for your consideration,
Anita Gundanna, CACF
Vanessa Leung, CACF

Asian American Community Organization Leaders

Jiyeon Chung, Apex for Youth
Lisa Gold, Asian American Arts Alliance
Annetta Seecharan, Chhaya CDC
Wayne Ho, Chinese-American Planning Council
Carlyn Cowen, Chinese-American Planning Council
Mae Lee, Chinese Progressive Association
Sara Kim, Korean Community Services of Metropolitan NY
Mohammad Razvi, Council of Peoples Organization
Linda Oalican, Damayan Migrant Workers Association
Karen Zhou, Homecrest Community Services
Beatrice Chen, Immigrant Social Services
Judy Ling, Immigrant Social Services
Hiroko Hatanaka, Japanese American Social Services Inc.
Chiya Ikemi, Japanese American Social Services, Inc.
Jeehae Fischer, Korean American Family Service Center
Chhaya Chhoum, Mekong NYC
John Park, MinKwon Center for Community Action
Becca Asaki, National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum, NY
Stella Yi, New York University Center for the Study of Asian American Health
Kavita Mehra, Sakhi for South Asian Women
Robina Niaz, Turning Point for Families
Guneet Kaur, United Sikhs

Yasmeen Hamza, Womankind
Eun-Kyung Kim, YWCA Queens

CC: Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie
Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins
Assemblymember Yuh-Line Niou, Co-Chair Asian Pacific American Task Force
Assemblymember Zohran Mamdani, Co-Chair Asian Pacific American Task Force
Assemblymember Ron Kim
Assemblymember Peter Abbate Jr.
Assemblymember Brian Barnwell
Assemblymember William Colton
Assemblymember Jessica Gonzalez-Rojas
Assemblymember Richard Gottfried
Assemblymember Alicia Hyndman
Assemblymember Dan Quart
Assemblymember Nily Rozic
Assemblymember Michaelle C. Solages
Assemblymember Clyde Vanel
Assemblymember David Weprin
Senator John Liu
Senator Kevin Thomas
Senator Julia Salazar