

SENATE RESOLUTION No. 120

STATE OF NEW JERSEY 219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED MARCH 22, 2021

Sponsored by:

Senator VIN GOPAL

District 11 (Monmouth)

Senator LORETTA WEINBERG

District 37 (Bergen)

Co-Sponsored by:

**Senators Codey, Diegnan, Gill, Greenstein, Scutari, Singleton, Thompson
and Turner**

SYNOPSIS

Condemns inflammatory rhetoric and abuse targeted at Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders and recognizes the contributions of these individuals and communities in New Jersey.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 3/25/2021)

1 **A SENATE RESOLUTION** condemning abuse against individuals who
2 are Asian American and Pacific Islander and recognizes the
3 impacts made on this State and country by Asian American and
4 Pacific Islander heritage.
5
6 **WHEREAS**, Asian American and Pacific Islanders are a significant and
7 important community in New Jersey; and
8 **WHEREAS**, The members of these communities have made significant
9 contributions to the culture and economy of this State; and
10 **WHEREAS**, Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month is
11 celebrated each May and serves to recognize the contributions and
12 influence of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders to the history,
13 culture, and achievements of the United States; and
14 **WHEREAS**, There are approximately 2 million Asian American owned
15 businesses in the United States that generate over \$700 billion in
16 annual revenue and employ nearly 4.5 million workers; and
17 **WHEREAS**, Over 2 million Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders are
18 working across the United States on the frontline of the COVID-19
19 pandemic in fields such as health care, law enforcement, first
20 responders, transportation, supermarkets, and other service
21 industries; and
22 **WHEREAS**, Twenty three million Asian Americans and Pacific
23 Islanders account for seven-percent of the population of the United
24 States; and
25 **WHEREAS**, New Jersey has nearly 1 million Asian Americans and
26 Pacific Islanders residing in the State, about 10 percent of the State
27 population; and
28 **WHEREAS**, The use of derogatory and offensive comments against
29 Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders has increased during the
30 COVID-19 pandemic; and
31 **WHEREAS**, The World Health organization and the United States
32 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recognize that naming
33 COVID-19 by its geographical location or linking the virus to a
34 specific ethnicity may lead to violence against certain communities;
35 and
36 **WHEREAS**, Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, there has
37 been an increase in reports of hate crimes and incidents against
38 individuals who are Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders; and
39 **WHEREAS**, The advocacy group Stop AAPI Hate, which tracks
40 incidents of hate against individuals who are Asian American and
41 Pacific Islander, reports that it received more than 2,800 reports of
42 hate incidents directed at members of the community nationwide
43 from March to December 2020; and
44 **WHEREAS**, In March 2020 alone, violence against these communities
45 included: a woman wearing a mask being kicked and punched at a
46 New York City subway station; two children and two adults being
47 stabbed at a grocery store in Texas; a couple assaulted in

1 Philadelphia, and a 16 year old boy attacked by bullies in
2 California; and

3 **WHEREAS**, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders should not live in
4 fear of attack and discrimination and verbal and physical attacks
5 against these communities are intolerable and should be condemned
6 by all government officials and residents of this State; now,
7 therefore,

8

9 **BE IT RESOLVED** *by the Senate of the State of New Jersey:*

10

11 1. This House condemns abuse and attacks against individuals
12 who are Asian American and Pacific Islander and recognizes the
13 significant contributions to this State and country by individuals of
14 Asian American and Pacific Islander heritage.

15

16 2. Copies of this resolution, as filed with the Secretary of State,
17 shall be transmitted by the Secretary of the Senate to the Governor
18 of the State of New Jersey, the New Jersey Attorney General, Stop
19 AAPI Hate, and Jersey Promise.

20

21

22 STATEMENT

23

24 This resolution condemns any discrimination against Asian
25 American and Pacific Islander communities and recognizes the
26 significant contribution that these communities make on a daily
27 basis to the State of New Jersey and the country.

28 Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders are one of the fastest
29 growing racial groups in New Jersey and it is imperative to build
30 understanding and bring disparate communities in New Jersey
31 together. New Jerseyans of Asian and Pacific Islander descent
32 represent roughly 10 percent of the State's total population, the
33 third highest proportion in the country. These communities
34 contribute nearly half a million eligible voters to the State, own
35 roughly 81,000 firms with combined revenue of roughly \$44
36 billion, and buying power of roughly \$57 to \$75 billion.
37 Additionally, in the United States, over 2 million Asian Americans
38 and Pacific Islanders are working as essential workers on the
39 frontline of the COVID-19 pandemic in fields such as health care,
40 law enforcement, first responders, transportation, supermarkets, and
41 other service industries.

42 In the past year, since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, there
43 has been a surge in abuse against Asian American and Pacific
44 Islander families and communities. Harassment has ranged from
45 being spat on and verbally abused to incidents of physical assault.
46 In New Jersey, Stop AAPI Hate reported nearly 50 incidents related
47 to the COVID-19 pandemic of Asian American and Pacific Islander
48 discrimination between March 19, 2020 and December 31, 2020.

1 This is caused by the rhetoric that blames Asian people for the
2 spread of COVID-1 and continued inflammatory commentary may
3 lead to more violence against the Asian American and Pacific
4 Islander communities. The reported 50 incidents against individuals
5 and communities marks an increase from the previous year. The
6 United Nations has detailed “an alarming level” of racially
7 motivated violence and other hate incidents against Asian
8 Americans and Pacific Islanders. This cannot continue in the state
9 of New Jersey and the country.

10 The State of New Jersey condemns and denounces acts of
11 racism, violence, xenophobia, and intolerance against Asian
12 American and Pacific Islander communities and individuals. The
13 State additionally recognizes and promotes the contributions made
14 by the Asian American and Pacific Islander communities
15 throughout the State and country.