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Legal Aid Condemns Increase in Violence Against Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders

(NEW YORK, NY) – The Legal Aid Society today released the following statement in response to increased violence against Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders across the country:

“We are witnessing a wave of violence against Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders across the country that is horrific and we all must come together to denounce these acts and stand in solidarity. These recent incidents began with flagrantly bigoted attacks by former President Donald J. Trump, who repeatedly used a racist expression to describe COVID and falsely blamed the AAPI community for the pandemic. But this violence is not new.

We must address this increase in violence against AAPI persons directly, but we must be cognizant that an over-reliance on law enforcement and incarceration is not a solution. We know from our country’s history that this approach has been ineffective and has disproportionately harmed communities of color. Instead, we must fight this violence through empowering our communities through education, resources, and legal services.

As our colleague Jason Wu recently wrote in an [op-ed](#), “I want us to demand so much more than the criminalization and incarceration of those who have harmed us. As the abolitionist activist and scholar Angela Davis famously said, ‘Prisons do not disappear social problems, they disappear human beings.’”

Legal Aid stands with the AAPI community who are struggling under the impact of this violence. We commit today and every day to dismantle the racist and violent systems that perpetuate and fuel harm and we will continue to speak out against AAPI targeted violence where and when we see it.”

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The Legal Aid Society exists for one simple yet powerful reason: to ensure that New Yorkers are not denied their right to equal justice because of poverty. For over 140 years, we have protected, defended, and advocated for those who have struggled in silence for far too long. Every day, in every borough, The Legal Aid Society changes the lives of our clients and helps improve our communities.

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