

March 25, 2020

**Racial Harassment & Attacks on Asian-Americans
During COVID-19 Pandemic**

2019-2020
HABA Board

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The Hmong American Bar Association has received reports of recent racial harassment and discriminatory attacks on people of Asian descent in our Minnesota communities and across the country during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. On March 25, 2020, Minnesota Public Radio aired a report on the recent racially motivated incidents directed at Asian Americans.¹ We are extremely concerned that the anxiety and fear caused by the pandemic will result in growing instances of racial harassment and violence against Asian-Americans, including Hmong Americans.

The Hmong American Bar Association condemns these acts.

We are heartened by the responses of Governor Walz and others who have issued remarks condemning blame against Asian-Americans but we believe there is more that can be done to curb the attacks as we all deal with the effects of the pandemic.

We write asking for your agency's assistance using the authority at your means to prevent and discourage these harmful acts. We urge you to publicly announce how and where reports should be filed and that your office will investigate and prosecute these racially motivated acts to the fullest extent of the law. We trust that you will have other ideas and methods as to how your agency may continue to provide a sense of safety for our Asian-American neighbors who now fear to go out in our communities.

Please do not hesitate to reach out to me, our board, and our members of the Hmong American Bar Association should you have any questions or ways in how we may partner together for our community members moving forward.

We hope that you join the Hmong American Bar Association in condemning these racially motivated acts.

Respectfully,

Mai Lee Yang
HABA President

¹ Feshir, Riham and Hannah Yang. March 25, 2020. "I don't have the virus': Asian Americans in Minnesota confront a COVID-19 backlash." <https://www.mprnews.org/story/2020/03/25/asian-americans-in-minnesota-confront-a-covid19-backlash>