

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

May 20, 2020

The Honorable William P. Barr
Attorney General
U.S. Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20530

The Honorable Christopher Wray
Director
Federal Bureau of Investigation
935 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20535

Dear Attorney General Barr and Director Wray:

I write to express my deep concern about the surge in discrimination and hate crimes against Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (AAPIs) related to the COVID-19 pandemic and the currently inadequate federal response. I urge the Department of Justice to utilize all resources to address the disturbing increase in anti-Asian discrimination, as the Department of Justice has done in the past.

Over the last few months of the COVID-19 pandemic, there have been an alarming increase in incidents of verbal harassment, shunning and physical assaults towards Asian Americans across the country. The Anti-Defamation League (ADL), reported there have been a significant number of reports of AAPI individuals being threatened and harassed on the street. In just six weeks of reporting, STOP AAPI HATE, an initiative of A3PCON, received over 1,700 reports of coronavirus discrimination from Asian Americans across the country.

In light of this reporting,

1. How many calls or e-tips of discrimination or hate crimes have been reported of/by Asian American persons?
2. How many cases has the FBI investigated and found to be federally prosecutable?
3. To what extent is the FBI working with local agencies?
4. How is the Department of Justice using its resources to reach out to affected communities and prevent discrimination or hate crimes from taking place?

In my hometown of Philadelphia, there have been several horrifying crimes reported that were targeted towards Asian Americans. In February, a young man and woman were physically assaulted by a group of juveniles at a SEPTA station in what appears to be a racially motivated anti-Asian attack. In March, several Asian American homes were harassed through letters. In April, an Asian American-owned restaurant in my Congressional district was vandalized with spray-paint graffiti that included a racial slur. The city of Philadelphia is home to a robust and lively Asian American community who is integral to the City and its residents. It is important that we protect all Americans during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Thank you and I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



Brendan F. Boyle
Member of Congress