

S. 937/H.R. 1843, THE COVID-19 HATE CRIMES ACT

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Asian Americans are currently grappling with the double threat of COVID-19 and the danger of ongoing anti-Asian racism and violence. Last March, the [FBI warned](#) of a potential surge in hate crime incidents against Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (AAPI) as the coronavirus spread. Over the last year, AAPI have been spat and coughed on, verbally assaulted, had their businesses vandalized, and been violently assaulted. [Nearly 3,800](#) first-hand accounts of anti-Asian discrimination were reported between March 2020 and February 2021. These numbers show that women are disproportionately affected and these incidents are happening in every state and the District of Columbia.

During his first week in office, President Biden signed a [Presidential Memorandum](#) to condemn and combat racism, xenophobia, and intolerance against AAPI. The President has further ordered [executive actions](#) to reduce disparities in the AAPI community and promote inclusion. Now, it's Congress's turn to act.

The COVID-19 Hate Crimes Act is an important step to confront the ongoing attacks targeting the AAPI community. President Biden [issued a statement](#) urging Congress to swiftly pass the COVID-19 Hate Crimes Act and both the House and Senate have signaled support for moving this bill forward.

The COVID-19 Hate Crimes Act would—

- Require the Attorney General to designate a person whose responsibility will be to expedite review of COVID-19 hate crimes reported to law enforcement.
- Build on President Biden's actions by mandating the issuance of guidance to state and local law enforcement on establishing an online reporting system that's available in multiple languages as well as expanding culturally appropriate public education campaigns and the collection of data.
- Mandate the issuance of guidance to describe best practices in mitigating racially discriminatory language in describing the COVID-19 pandemic.

One in four Americans and nearly half of all Asians have witnessed an Asian person being blamed for the coronavirus. We need to address this rising hate now. For questions, please contact Wendy Clerinx (wendy_clerinx@hirono.senate.gov) or Jasmine Pang (jasmine_pang@hirono.senate.gov).

38 Democratic Cosponsors: Duckworth, Baldwin, Bennet, Blumenthal, Booker, Brown, Cantwell, Cardin, Carper, Casey, Coons, Cortez Masto, Durbin, Feinstein, Gillibrand, Kaine, Kelly, Klobuchar, Leahy, Lujan, Markey, Menendez, Merkley, Murray, Padilla, Peters, Reed, Rosen, Sanders, Shaheen, Smith, Stabenow, Van Hollen, Warner, Warnock, Warren, Whitehouse, Wyden.

Endorsed by: American College of Physicians, American Medical Association, Anti-Defamation League, Asian & Pacific Islander American Health Forum, Asian/Pacific Islander American Chamber of Commerce and Entrepreneurship (National ACE), Asian Americans Advancing Justice, Association of Asian Pacific Community Health Organizations, Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus, National Asian Pacific American Bar Association, National Council of Asian Pacific Americans, Oxfam America, YWCA USA