



April 9, 2020

The Honorable Grace Meng
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Rep. Meng:

On behalf of the American College of Physicians (ACP), I am writing to express our strong support for H. Res. 908, a resolution that condemns all forms of anti-Asian sentiment as related to the Coronavirus disease (COVID-19), which is caused by severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2). We commend you for taking this essential step to support the health and safety of our nation during a national crisis and for proposing that Congress condemn all forms of expressions of racism, xenophobia, discrimination, anti-Asian sentiment, scapegoating, and ethnic or religious intolerance. We share your alarm about reported incidents of harassment and violence against members of the Asian American and Pacific Islander (API) community and have [spoken out](#) strongly against these terrible acts in recent weeks.

The American College of Physicians is the largest medical specialty organization and the second-largest physician membership society in the United States. ACP members include 159,000 internal medicine physicians (internists), related subspecialists, and medical students. Internal medicine physicians are specialists who apply scientific knowledge and clinical expertise to the diagnosis, treatment, and compassionate care of adults across the spectrum from health to complex illness. Internal medicine specialists treat many of the patients at greatest risk from COVID-19, including the elderly and patients with pre-existing conditions like diabetes, heart disease and asthma.

ACP strongly condemns any and all prejudice, harassment, violence, and discrimination based on an individual's race, ethnic origin, ancestry, primary language, cultural background or nationality. As our country and our health care system bear the overwhelming challenge of responding to the COVID-19 national emergency, this ethos is more important than ever. We are deeply concerned and disturbed about reports of harassment against individuals of Asian descent, including physicians and other clinicians. At this challenging time, our nation's focus should be on respecting the dignity of others. We cannot allow prejudice and discrimination to divide us.

Hate crimes directed against individuals based on individuals' race, ethnic origin, ancestry, primary language, cultural background or nationality are a true public health threat. We applaud that H. Res. 908 calls on Federal law enforcement officials, working with State and local officials, to collect data to document the rise of incidences of hate crimes due to COVID-19. ACP policy supports the collection and publication of statistics on hate crimes. We strongly believe that more research is needed about

the impact of hate crimes on public health, understanding and preventing hate crimes, and effective interventions that address the needs of hate crime survivors and their communities.

ACP has long fought against discrimination due to race, ethnic origin, nationality, cultural background and other personal characteristics. Our policies have called attention to the [public health impact of hate crimes](#) and discrimination, and to the harmful consequences of [racial and ethnic disparities in health care](#). Therefore, it is imperative that physicians, and all people, speak out against hate and discrimination, especially during this national crisis caused by COVID-19.

We applaud your leadership for bringing forth H. Res. 908 and urge Congress to pass the resolution in order to bring the necessary awareness and focus to past and future acts of discrimination, harassment, and violence against members of the API community due to COVID-19. As physicians, we are uniquely situated to speak out against these hateful, discriminatory, and violent acts and inform the public about why these acts are wrong and misguided. We look forward to working with you to advance this resolution through Congress and stand ready to serve as a resource for you on any matters regarding the COVID-19 national health emergency.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert M. McLean". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Robert" being the most prominent.

Robert M. McLean, MD, MACP
President