



# **Duckworth Joins Warren, Hirono and Colleagues to Call for Federal Agencies to Address Coronavirus-Related Racist and Xenophobic Attacks Against Asian**

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WASHINGTON, DC – U.S. Senator Tammy Duckworth (D-IL) joined Senators Elizabeth Warren (D-MA) and Mazie Hirono (D-HI) in leading a letter to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights (USCCR) urging it to issue guidance to federal agencies on preventing and addressing anti-Asian racism and xenophobia related to the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic. There has been no coordinated effort across federal agencies to address this issue.

“There has not been a concerted effort from federal agencies to prevent and address anti-Asian sentiment related to the COVID-19 pandemic,” the lawmakers wrote. “In order to reduce the dangerous and hateful spread of anti-Asian sentiment that is on the rise during this pandemic, we respectfully request that USCCR issue such guidance without delay, and that it take into account language accessibility for Asian Americans with limited English proficiency.”

As the COVID-19 outbreak continues to spread across the country, reports of physical and verbal attacks against Asian Americans associated with the virus have spiked. There has been a surge of reports of incidents of racist and xenophobic attacks against Asian Americans to tip lines and news outlets across the country, with reports of many Asian Americans expressing fear for their physical safety and that of their family members and friends. Additionally, anti-Asian stigma has led to a reported slump in activity in Asian-owned restaurants and businesses.

Anti-Asian sentiment relating to COVID-19 has been voiced by certain members of the federal government, including President Trump and several members of Congress, who have used harmful and stigmatizing language when referring to COVID-19 as “the

Chinese virus” or “the China virus,” despite warnings that use of the terms would cause harm to Asian Americans, and despite World Health Organization guidance discouraging the use of naming diseases based on geographic location.

Along with Duckworth, Warren and Hirono, the letter was also signed by Senators Richard Blumenthal (D-CT), Cory Booker (D-NJ), Maria Cantwell (D-WA), Kamala D. Harris (D-CA), Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), Edward J. Markey (D-MA), Jacky Rosen (D-NV), Bernie Sanders (I-VT) and Chris Van Hollen (D-MD).

A copy of the letter can be found below and [here](#).