Legislation Text

File #: RES 20-621, **Version:** 1

Condemning xenophobia and racism against Asian American and Pacific Islander communities in the City of Saint Paul.

WHEREAS, Novel COVID-19 is galvanizing xenophobia and racism against our Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) communities; and

WHEREAS, this modern form of discrimination falls within a long-established historical pattern of scapegoating or characterizing Asians as foreign, invasive threats, or as “the other” that has contributed to demonstrated negative health effects in our AAPI communities; and

WHEREAS, communities are shifting to a new normal to respond to COVID-19, but AAPI Minnesotans also now indicate that their safety is compromised because of increasing xenophobic and racist behaviors; and

WHEREAS, the use of anti-Asian terminology and rhetoric related to COVID-19, such as the “Chinese Virus”, “Wuhan Virus”, and “Kung-flu” have perpetuated anti-Asian stigma; and

WHEREAS, stories are emerging about harassment, discrimination, and bias that is making AAPI community members feel targeted; and

WHEREAS, since January 2020, there has been a dramatic increase in reports of hate crimes and incidents against those of AAPI descent; and

WHEREAS, according to Stop AAPI Hate, there were over 1,000 cases related to COVID-19 anti-Asian discrimination between March 19, 2020, and March 31, 2020, across the United States; and

WHEREAS, the increased use of anti-Asian rhetoric has resulted in Asian Americans being harassed, assaulted, and scapegoated for the COVID-19 pandemic; and

WHEREAS in March 2020, anti-Asian violence includes: a woman wearing a mask was kicked and punched at a New York City subway station; two children and two adults were stabbed at a wholesale grocery in Midland, Texas; a couple was assaulted and robbed by a group of attackers in Philadelphia; and a 16-year-old boy was sent to the hospital after being attacked by bullies in Los Angeles, California; and

WHEREAS, the City’s AAPI residents are valued contributors to the City’s workforce, economy, and political representation; and

WHEREAS, in Saint Paul, our thriving AAPI community is a major proportion of all of our residents and a thriving diverse community that spans languages, nationalities, ethnicities, cultures and more; and

WHEREAS, the City of Saint Paul recognizes the history of racism during times of crisis against Indigenous, Black, Latinx, Muslim, Hindu, Jewish and Sikh; immigrants; refugees; and undocumented people; and

WHEREAS, the Human Rights and Equal Economic Opportunity Department (HREEO) has engaged in outreach to the following communities: Hmong, Karen, Lao, Korean, Japanese, Chinese, Vietnamese, Cambodia, and the Minnesota Asian Pacific Islander Bar Association to explain how to file a complaint of

discrimination with HREEO and encourage these communities to use the utilize the resources of HREEO to anyone who has been discriminated in Saint Paul; and

WHEREAS, the City recently launched a COVID-19 language resource line including translators who are available to answer questions in different languages; the phone number is 651-266-6000 and the email is LanguageResources@ci.stpaul.mn.us <mailto:LanguageResources@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; and

WHEREAS, the City's Human Rights Ordinance provides protections against discrimination that takes places in the city of Saint Paul; and

WHEREAS, if you are a victim of racism or xenophobia report the incident to the Human Rights and Equal Economic Opportunity Department, they provide free investigations of these claims, visit www.stpaul.gov/humanrights or call 651-266-8966 <http://www.stpaul.gov/humanrights or call 651-266-8966>; and now therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, the City of Saint Paul will partner with elected officials, community leaders, and organizations to condemn violence of any kind, toward any community; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, the City of Saint Paul will continue to protect Indigenous, Black, Latinx, Muslim, Hindu, Jewish, and Sikh; immigrants; refugees; and undocumented people against racism and xenophobia; and be it

FINALLY RESOLVED, the City of Saint Paul urges Ramsey County Attorney John Choi, Attorney General Keith Ellison, State Representatives, State Senators, and Governor Walz to take immediate action to ensure the safety of these communities against racism and xenophobia across the State of Minnesota.

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