

# Township of Verona

# Proclamation

WHEREAS, 23 million Asian-Americans reside in the United States and account for 7% of the Nation's population; and

WHEREAS, over 941,000 Asian-Americans account for over 10% of New Jersey's population; and

WHEREAS, New Jersey had the 3<sup>rd</sup> highest population of Asian-American residents after California and Hawaii; and

WHEREAS, Asian-Americans are the fastest growing racial group in the State of New Jersey; and

WHEREAS, the use of anti-Asian slurs and rhetoric related to COVID-19, such as the "China Virus", have perpetuated and intensified anti-Asian stigma; and

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

WHEREAS, according to a recent study, there were over 400 individual cases of anti-Asian discrimination between February 9, 2020, and March 7, 2020; and

WHEREAS, according to Stop AAPI Hate, by August 2020, there were over almost 2600 reports of Anti-Asian incidents nationwide and by the end of February 2021, those reported incidents had grown to about 3800, NOT including the most recent shooting at three (3) Atlanta area spas on March 16, 2021; and

WHEREAS, the hate crimes and discrimination are rooted in historical racism and connected to the history of violence and discrimination against Asian-Americans, including the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 and FDR's Executive order establishing Japanese American Concentration Camps of the 1940s, among other reprehensible shameful laws; and

WHEREAS, the World Health Organization and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have issued guidance calling on media outlets and national authorities to avoid naming infectious diseases for locations to avoid stigmatizing groups of people; and

WHEREAS, Asian Americans Advancing Justice (the AAJC) has issued comprehensive and interactive training for all communities to learn how to safely intervene and de-escalate potential incidents as bystanders; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED that I, Jack McEvoy, Mayor of the Township of Verona, along with the Township of Verona do hereby:

1. Condemn and denounce any and all anti-Asian sentiment in any form.
2. Recognize that the health and safety of all Americans, no matter their background must be of utmost priority.
3. Condemn all manifestations of expressions of racism, xenophobia, discrimination and anti-Asian sentiment, scapegoating and ethnic or religious intolerance.
4. Recommit our community in building a more inclusive, diverse, and tolerant organization and environmental grassroots movement.
5. Urge the United States Congress to pass the COVID-19 Hate Crimes Act that would expedite the federal government's response to the rise of hate crimes exacerbated during the pandemic, support state and local governments to improve hate crimes reporting, and ensure that hate crimes information is more accessible to Asian American communities.
6. Call on every member of our community to report incidents of anti-Asian violence when and wherever possible to their local law enforcement agency.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I hereunto set my hand and cause the Official Seal of the Township of Verona, New Jersey, to be affixed this 22<sup>nd</sup> day of March 2021.



Jack McEvoy  
Mayor