

CITY OF NEW YORK

MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD FOUR

330 West 42nd Street, 26th floor New York, NY 10036
tel: 212-736-4536 fax: 212-947-9512
www.nyc.gov/mcb4

LOWELL D. KERN
Chair

JESSE R. BODINE
District Manager

April 14th, 2021

Hon. Bill de Blasio
Mayor
City Hall
New York, New York 10007

Hon. Corey Johnson
Speaker, City Council
City Hall Office
New York, NY 10007

Cyrus R. Vance, Jr.,
NYC District Attorney
1 Hogan Pl.,
New York NY, 10013

Dermot F. Shea
NYPD Commissioner
One Police Plaza Path
New York, NY 10038

Dear Mayor de Blasio, Speaker Johnson, Mr. Vance, and Commissioner Shea,

On the recommendation of its Social and Racial Justice Task Force, Manhattan Community Board 4 (MCB4) at its regularly scheduled Executive Committee meeting on March 29, 2021, voted, by a vote of 39 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstaining, and 0 present but not eligible to vote, to urge your office, NYPD and other relevant City Agencies to (1) urgently assess the extent of the anti-Asian hate crime and violence in our district and the city at large, and identify what strategies will be used to prevent future acts of anti-Asian hate crime in our community; (2) forcefully condemn anti-Asian violence, and commit to working with all community leaders and city agencies to bring this spate of bigoted violence to an end; (3) develop programs to educate the public about their rights and protections in connection with prejudice and hate crimes; and (4) partner with organizations experienced in bystander intervention training to offer free training to fellow New Yorkers to empower them to be more effective allies.

MCB4 condemns the recent prejudiced violent attacks against our Asian-American neighbors, both in our own district as well as the city. Media have documented the rise in anti-Asian bias attacks extensively, nationwide and across the city. The New York Times [mentioned](#) in February of this year that a not-for-profit tracking anti-Asian attacks “received 2,800 reports in 2020, around 240 of which were physical assaults, and [they] received over 3,000 reports since it started tracking Covid-specific hate incidents last year.”¹ In April of 2020, Huffington Post [reported](#) “a surge in local reports of anti-Asian harassment and discrimination: 105 reported incidents since February, compared to just five during the same period last year” just in New York City.² It is crucial to note that hate crimes and bias incidents have been found to be vastly under-reported, so many of these numbers only reflect reported incidents.

We also acknowledge that women are being disproportionately targeted in these anti-Asian attacks. According to the advocacy organization Stop AAPI Hate, 68% of those who reported anti-Asian attacks during the pandemic year were women. “There is an intersectional dynamic going on that others may perceive both Asians and women and Asian women as easier targets,” said Russell Jeung, professor of Asian American studies at San Francisco State University. Professor Jeung also said that the stereotype that Asian women are meek and submissive fed into this intersectional violence.

Alarming, in our own community, a 65-year-old Asian woman was brutally attacked on West 43 Street on March 29th, 2021 as [reported in New York Times](#)³ following another incident as [reported](#) in the New York Post, “[a] 41-year-old victim was bending over to pick up packages... in Hell’s Kitchen just before 7 p.m. Monday when a man poured and spat his drink on the back of her neck and on her bags, according to authorities and police sources. ‘Go back to China!’ he allegedly snarled at her before taking off”.⁴

While we appreciate that NYPD has recently convened an Asian Hate Crime Task Force, we recognize that the law enforcement measures alone will not be sufficient to end this eruption. We need to see increased and coordinated efforts toward prevention by the city agencies. Aside from the efforts of NYPD and the Office for the Prevention of Hate Crimes, we need better coordination between city agencies, law enforcement, prosecution, and strong condemnation from city leaders. We request a report from NYPD and other responsible agencies such as the NYC Commission on Human Rights and OPHC on anti-Asian bias attacks in our community district and their plans to address them. We also

¹ <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/21/opinion/anti-asian-violence.html>

² https://www.huffpost.com/entry/asian-americans-attacks-hate-crimes-coronavirus_n_5e9dbb23c5b6488571e8a24e

³ <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/30/nyregion/asian-attack-nyc.html>

⁴ <https://nypost.com/2021/03/16/asian-victims-targeted-in-two-separate-nyc-attacks-cops/>

request free [bystander intervention training](#) be offered to our community members to help us all be better allies to our fellow New Yorkers who are victims of bias crimes.⁵

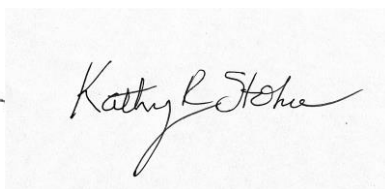
Additionally, we request that the responsible City agencies create tools including a visual aid campaign to help educate Asian community on how to recognize & report Asian hate crimes in different languages considering the language barriers. Such a tool explaining “How to Report a Hate Crime” (or *any* crime) is essential to the elderly community as the majority of them do not know how to access the internet or use their phone. It is typically harder for them to write down detailed descriptions of incidents. Helping them flash useful English phrases to a bystander to seek help during an attack if they are not able to speak English could be vital.

Only swift and sure action *now* will help our community foster an environment where everyone understands that anti-Asian bias, and bias attacks of any kind, are not welcome in CB4 and the rest of the City.

Sincerely,



Lowell Kern
Chair
Manhattan Community Board 4



Katy Stokes
Co-Chair
Social and Racial Justice
Task Force



Viren
Co-Chair
Social and Racial
Task Force

CC: Hon. Gale A. Brewer, Manhattan Borough President
NYC Commission on Human Rights
Mayor's Office for the Prevention of Hate Crimes,
The Mayor's Community Affairs Unit (CAU)
The Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs

⁵ <https://www.advancingjustice-chicago.org/what-we-do/bystander-intervention-trainings/>