



**Written Statement from the National Council of Asian Pacific Americans (NCAPA)  
For the Hearing Entitled, “Constitutional and Common Sense Steps to Reduce Gun Violence”  
Senate Committee on the Judiciary  
March 23, 2021 at 10:00 AM**

Dear Chairman Durbin, Ranking Member Grassley and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of our 37 member organizations, the National Council of Asian Pacific Americans (NCAPA) is pleased to submit this written statement to the Senate Committee on the Judiciary for today’s hearing.

Established in 1996, NCAPA is a coalition of some of the largest national Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander (AANHPI) organizations around the country. Based in Washington, D.C., NCAPA works to represent the interests of the greater AANHPI community, including the East Asian, South Asian, Southeast Asian, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander communities. NCAPA’s members also include organizations that work in civil rights, immigration, health, education, and housing and economic justice. We thank the Committee for hosting this important and hearing.

To begin with, we would remind Senators of the Committee that the Asian American community is not monolithic—we are incredibly diverse. From where we trace our roots, to our lived experiences here in this country, the strength of our community is the multitude of stories we have to tell. For this very reason, our views on policy can also differ.

Are there Asian Americans who own guns and oppose stricter gun laws? Of course. Do these views represent the majority of Asian Americans? Absolutely not.

With regards to policy questions on common sense gun control, a recent survey found that a majority of Asian American voters support stricter gun control laws in this country.<sup>1</sup> In fact, many of our member organizations, who are leaders in the Asian American Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander community would support the objectives of the legislation the committee is discussing today.

---

<sup>1</sup> 2020 Asian American Voter Survey (AAVS) by APIAVote, AAPI Data, and Asian Americans Advancing Justice | AAJC ([https://aapidata.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/aavs2020\\_crosstab\\_CAonly.html](https://aapidata.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/aavs2020_crosstab_CAonly.html))

However, we should be exceedingly clear: efforts to capitalize on the tragedy in Atlanta and oppose efforts to reduce gun violence is deeply problematic and profoundly disrespectful to our community during this painful time.

Eight people lost their lives in Atlanta. Six of them were Asian women. All of their families have had their lives turned upside down, rocked by catastrophic loss, and an entire community mourns with them.

No doubt, every Senator on this Committee have or will offer thoughts and prayers to the victims. We would ask those Senators who also actively stoked xenophobic blame for COVID-19 for the last year: will you acknowledge the damage your rhetoric has inflicted on Americans here in the United States?

For those Senators who will argue that mental health was the cause—not racism, we would ask: how long will you continue to ignore the intersection of race and gender? Blaming a “sex addiction,” while targeting Asian spas belies a racialized and hypersexualized view of Asian women that is in fact, racist.

To all Senators, we would urge awareness in what has become a blind spot across the government, and that is the Asian American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander community. There is truth in pointing out that because of lack of funding and engagement that is linguistically and culturally competent, many immigrant communities feel alone. In the wake of COVID-19, this has been exacerbated as racist vitriol has led many Asian Americans to feel even further isolated.

These conditions, if not addressed, may very well lead to communities seeking other means of protection. However, the solution is not more guns in communities of color—it’s investing meaningfully in communities so they feel seen and valued as part of what makes America special.

The other part of the solution is dismantling white supremacy.

This pandemic has already claimed too many lives. We have allowed racism to shape our response to it and it has cost more. This must end.

Gregg Orton

National Director, The National Council of Asian Pacific Americans

