

# U.S. Sen. Baldwin: Calls for vote on legislation to address surge of anti-Asian hate crimes during coronavirus pandemic

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WASHINGTON, D.C. – U.S. Senator Tammy Baldwin is calling for a Senate vote on legislation she has cosponsored to address the rise of hate crimes and violence targeted at Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (AAPIs). *The COVID-19 Hate Crimes Act* would assign a point person at the Department of Justice (DOJ) to expedite the review of COVID-19-related hate crimes, providing support for state and local law enforcement agencies to respond to these hate crimes, and coordinating with local and federal partners to mitigate racially discriminatory language used to describe the pandemic.

“We must stand together in support of the Asian American and Pacific Islander community and stand together against the rise in COVID-19-related racism, hate crimes and violence. I am thankful for the leadership Senator Hirono has provided in introducing this legislation because it is clear we have a great deal of work to do in our country to combat racism, discrimination and violence targeted against the AAPI community,” **said Senator Baldwin**. “I am proud to stand in support of the COVID-19 Hate Crimes Act. The Senate should take action on this legislation to provide the Department of Justice and local law enforcement more tools to combat hate crimes, especially in the Asian-American community.”

The [COVID-19 Hate Crimes Act](#) is led by Senator Mazie K. Hirono (D-HI) and Representative Grace Meng (D-NY).

“We’ve seen the horrifying consequences of racist language as AAPI communities across our country experience hate crimes and violence related to the pandemic,” **said Senator Hirono**. “The COVID-19 Hate Crimes Act addresses the

surge in violence against AAPI communities by dedicating an official at the Department of Justice to expeditiously review hate crimes reported to law enforcement. The bill also provides resources for communities to come together and fight intolerance and hate. This is no less than victims deserve.”

The COVID-19 Hate Crimes Act directs DOJ to:

- Designate a DOJ employee to assist with expedited review of COVID-19 hate crimes reported to federal, state, and/or local law enforcement;
- Provide guidance for state and local law enforcement agencies to:
  - o establish online reporting of hate crimes or incidents, and to have online reporting available in multiple languages;
  - o expand culturally competent and linguistically appropriate public education campaigns, and collection of data and public reporting of hate crimes; and
    - Issue guidance detailing best practices to mitigate racially discriminatory language in describing the COVID-19 pandemic, in coordination with the Secretary of Health and Human Services, the COVID-19 Health Equity Task Force and community-based organizations.

Last month, Senator Baldwin supported [the introduction of a Senate resolution](#) led by Senators Hirono and Tammy Duckworth (D-IL) to condemn all forms of anti-Asian sentiment, racism and discrimination, and call on federal officials, in collaboration with state and local agencies and Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) community organizations, to address the rise in COVID-19-related hate crimes. The Senate resolution was introduced in the wake of the Atlanta shooting—where eight people were killed, including six women of Asian descent, and following a new report that AAPIs were targeted in nearly 3,800 hate incidents across the country since last March.