

Elimin8Hate
4862 Pine Crescent
Vancouver, BC
V6J 4L3

March 30, 2022

Kasari Govender
B.C. Office of the Human Rights Commissioner
#536, 999 Canada Place
Vancouver, BC
V6C 3E1

Re: Inquiry into Hate in the Pandemic Written Submission

Dear Kasari Govender,

Elimin8Hate (E8) is thankful for the opportunity to provide an oral presentation on the inquiry into hate in the pandemic earlier this month. As a grassroots Asian led not-for-profit organization and a subdivision of the Vancouver Asian Film Festival (VAFF), our aim is to eliminate and dismantle anti-Asian racism through film and media on individual, institutional and systemic levels. E8 hosts the racist incident reporting centre on our website to collect data on incidents of racism, hate and violence experienced by the Asian diaspora in Canada. Our partners, Project 1907, and the Chinese Canadian National Council for Social Justice (CCNC-SJ) then aggregate the reports to analyze and better understand the national landscape of anti-Asian racism. Further to our conversation in early March, we would like to share further insight below.

We would like to draw your attention to the alarming spike in Anti-Asian hate crimes which significantly hinders the development of racial equity and an inclusive society. Vancouver is North America's anti-Asian hate crime capital, with more reported cases in the city alone in 2020 compared to the top ten most populous U.S. cities combined. Studies found approximately one out of two residents of Asian descent in B.C. experienced a hate incident in 2020. CCNC-SJ data aggregated further established that 43% of B.C. residents of Asian descent had experienced a racist incident in 2020. However, anti-Asian hate has long been an everyday struggle Asians have had to endure.

Asians have felt historical systemic racism in Canada even prior to the pandemic. In the 19th century, we saw a "Chinese Head Tax" which lasted for almost 40 years from 1885, claiming a fixed fee of up to \$500, to discourage Chinese people from entering Canada. The B.C. government enacted to also ban Chinese, Japanese and South Asians from voting in the province. Discriminatory laws permeated into the 20th century, where the Royal Commission on Chinese and Japanese Immigration concluded that Asians were "unfit for full citizenship... obnoxious to a free community and dangerous to the state" and excluded Asians from gaining full Canadian citizenship in 1902. Asians have been chastised and marginalized through discriminatory immigration policies, exclusion from political spaces and persistent othering throughout Canadian history. Systemic racism is reflected in the media as well, which has also contributed to perpetuating dangerous and harmful Asian stereotypes.

As an organization that utilizes arts, film, and media as a medium for progressive social change, E8 is especially concerned with the reporting bias of Asians. First, the 2021 Atlanta shooting which killed 6 Asian women demonstrate an inextricable link between racial fetishizing and sexual harassment and

violence against Asian women. Second, the Model Minority Myth popularized by a 1966 NYT article assumes all Asians achieve universal success, glossing over the systemic racism Asians face and pits Asian communities against other communities of color. Third, a 2020 study found a shift in tone which targeted Asian-Americans and an increased use of 800% in the term “Chinese Virus” in conservative news articles, as Asian-Americans were perceived as less American than their Caucasian counterparts. Having both reviewed and experienced anti-Asian hate in Canada, it evokes a sense of emergency and compels E8 to take active measures in ensuring they are put to a halt.

To counter anti-Asian hate, we propose several calls to action through eliminating, empowering, and educating. To eliminate, we suggest creating 1) a provincial media watchdog organization which targets biased media reporting, 2) an annual report tracking news on racialized communities, and 3) the promotion and use of E8’s style guide. To empower, we ask for funding grassroots organizations which are dismantling inequitable systems. For example, E8 could run public workshops on creating PSAs, bystander interventions, and so forth. To educate, we want to work alongside community organizations to create educational materials with the aim of informing British Columbians of the overall contributions Asian-Canadians have had.

Thank you for taking the time to listen to our concerns and accepting this written submission on the inquiry into hate in the pandemic. We look forward to receiving a response from you on this matter.

Best regards,



Audrey Wong
Executive Director, EliminateHate