

Statement in Response to Recent Incidents and Rhetoric Targeting Asian Americans

Just days after September 11th, President George W. Bush gave one of the defining speeches of his Presidency. In the wake of increasing attacks and rhetoric targeting Muslim Americans, he made clear that xenophobia “should not and will not stand in America.”

Today, we face another grave national threat, and there are again reports of attacks and intimidation targeting a particular ethnic group: Chinese Americans, and in some cases Asian Americans of other backgrounds as well.

President Bush’s words are no less true today. Xenophobia in all its forms is anathema to America’s core ideals. Indeed, part of what unites us as Americans is that most of us, or our forebears, were once newcomers here ourselves.

We in California are a state knit together by immigrants, many of Chinese background. They are our neighbors and colleagues. They are integral to our school communities and religious congregations. They are “we”.

Our economy in Silicon Valley relies on talent from abroad like no other place in America. According to the forthcoming 2020 Silicon Valley Competitiveness & Innovation Project, 59 of every 100 STEM workers in Silicon Valley were born abroad. One out of every six of our STEM workers hails from mainland China, Hong Kong or Taiwan. In Silicon Valley we welcome – and rely on – talented, creative people from all over the world.

When voices on street corners, in the media or in Washington veer toward nativism, we in Silicon Valley need to remember who we are. We need to know that vitriol demonizing one group or another is insidious because, even if it comes from a small handful of people, it can infect a country so easily.

This is an infection, though, that doesn’t require the expertise of medical professionals. **It requires that we all stand together.**

SILICON VALLEY:
Better Together

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