

Poll: More Americans believe anti-Asian hate on the rise

By Terry Tang and Hannah Fingerhut
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — A majority of Americans across racial and ethnic groups believe discrimination has worsened in the last year against Asian Americans, who became the target of attacks after being unfairly blamed for the coronavirus pandemic.

A poll from The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research finds 60% of Americans say discrimination against Asian Americans has swelled compared with a year ago, including 71% of Asian Americans, 66% of Black Americans, 59% of white Americans and 55% of Hispanic Americans.

Nearly half of Americans believe Asian Americans encounter “a great deal” or “quite a lot” of discrimination in the U.S. today. The poll also finds about 6 in 10 Americans say racism in the U.S. in general is a “very” or “extremely” serious problem. And a majority of Asian Americans say they feel unsafe in public because of their race.

Susan Lee, of Sacramento, California, said friends initiated conversations with her about racism as random attacks on Asians became more frequent, but the 72-year-old Chinese American noted a key difference between friends who were Asian and non-Asian.

“My non-Asian friends are probably more astonished that this is occurring,” Lee



Genaro Molina/Los Angeles Times-TNS

A member of the Thai-American community makes his message known at a rally against Asian hate crimes in Thai Town in Los Angeles on April 8, 2021. They also gathered to show solidarity for the AAPI community. Los Angeles City Councilman Mitch O’Farrell and Los Angeles City Attorney Mike Feuer spoke against anti-Asian sentiment at the rally.

said. “I think Chinese or ‘Asians’ have always been looked at as a positive asset. I think they are puzzled by that situation.”

Barbara Canchola, 76, of El Paso, Texas, said she would have answered “not at all” if she had been asked pre-pandemic if Asian Americans face racism. Canchola, who identifies as Hispanic, said she associated anti-Asian discrimination as something way in the past like Japanese American internment camps during World War II.

“I really wouldn’t think they are facing any kind of discrimination because I happen to think they’re very well

educated — most of them — and they don’t face that much scrutiny,” Canchola said. “However, ever since the pandemic began and it was a labeled a ‘China thing,’ that’s where it all began.”

She attributes her new outlook to all the television coverage “where the people are being assaulted on the street out of the blue.”

Renee Tajima-Pena, an Asian American Studies professor at the University of California, Los Angeles and co-producer of the PBS docuseries “Asian Americans,” isn’t surprised some people have never thought of Asian Americans as victims. The

dominant narrative has always been they are successful, don’t speak up and, therefore, encounter little racism.

“The model minority myth is such a drug for Americans,” Tajima-Pena said.

Between March 2020 and this past March, more than 6,600 anti-Asian hate incidents have been documented by Stop AAPI Hate, a national reporting center. The encounters range from verbal harassment to attacks that ended fatally, including the March 16 Atlanta-area shootings that killed six Asian women.

The Center for the Study

of Hate & Extremism at California State University, San Bernardino, found that Asian-targeted hate crimes in the largest U.S. cities rose 145% in 2020 compared with 2019, even though hate crimes overall declined 6%. In the first quarter of this year, anti-Asian crimes reported to police in 16 major cities and counties jumped 164% from the same time period last year.

“That’s why people understand now the violence Asian Americans face,” Tajima-Pena said. “People couldn’t avoid it in the press or the national conversation. People are gathering data and talking about it.”

Fifty-seven percent of Asian Americans say they feel unsafe in public “often” or “sometimes” because of their race, similar to the share of Black Americans and higher than the share of Hispanic or white Americans. Because the survey was conducted in English and Spanish, it is representative of the English-speaking Asian American population but may not include those who primarily speak a language other than English.

Glendon Yuri-Sweetland, 34, of Brewer, Maine, blames former President Donald Trump for the increased discrimination against Asian Americans. Trump’s constant referrals to COVID-19 as the “Chinese virus” and other racist terms are still embedded in a lot of minds, he said.

“As my husband would say, ‘It’s only stirring the pot,’” Yuri-Sweetland said. “But I think that even just having that platform for a while, our former president probably has had enough exposure to get his message out.”

Close to half of Americans are “very” or “extremely” concerned that incidents of violence targeting Asian Americans have increased because of the COVID-19 pandemic, according to the poll, including about two-thirds of Asian Americans.

President Joe Biden last week signed the COVID-19 Hate Crimes Act. The legislation will put a Justice Department official in charge of a review of anti-Asian hate crimes and will allot federal grants for law enforcement training and hate crime hotlines.

Tajima-Pena believes the visibility of Asian Americans outside of their communities has fundamentally changed in the past year and it isn’t going to fade. And videos like the one showing the brutal beating of a Filipino American woman in New York City as three people stood by and watched have undoubtedly contributed to the greater awareness.

“I think the narrative is shifting,” Tajima-Pena said. “It’s like 2020 was really the year where our response was ‘Stop AAPI hate’ ... The flip side of it is in 2021, people are really looking at solutions and solidarity.”

BALLOTS

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“It creates another level of complexity in a system that is problematic,” House Republican Leader Christine Drazen of Canby said. “A deadline is a deadline is a deadline.”

Drazen also said the U.S. Postal Service has shifted most of its mail processing to Portland in the two decades since the 2001 vote.

She also questioned a provision that allows a ballot to be counted even if the postmark is unclear.

Rayfield said that when a

voter signs the return envelope containing a ballot — a signature is required for elections officials to match it with a signature on file — it will include a statement that the ballot was mailed on or before election day. If a voter does otherwise, it is considered perjury, a Class

C felony punishable by a maximum fine of \$125,000 and five years in prison.

Secretary of State Shemia Fagan, the state’s chief elections officer, endorsed an election-day deadline in testimony to the House Rules Committee on Feb. 11. She said it was

time to end public confusion about when ballots should be mailed in time for county elections officials to receive them.

The bill also would change an optional election date from the third Tuesday in September to the fourth Tuesday in August.

Baker County CHURCH DIRECTORY

BAKER CITY CHRISTIAN CHURCH
Sunday Worship
First Service 8:30 AM
2nd Service & Sunday School 10 AM
Jr. High & High School Youth
Tues 6:30 PM
Youth Pastor Silas Moe
675 Hwy 7, Baker City • 541-523-5425

Harvest Church
EARLY WORSHIP GATHERING
8:30 AM
SECOND WORSHIP GATHERING
10:30 AM
3720 Birch St, Baker City
541-523-4233

SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH
Saturday Worship
11:00 AM
www.bakercitydsda.com
17th & Pocahontas, Baker City
541-523-4913

SAINT ALPHONSUS HOSPITAL CHAPEL
Open to all patients, family and friends for reflection and prayer.
St. Alphonsus Hospital in Baker City

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
Sunday Worship Service
10:30 AM
1995 4th Street, Baker City
541-523-5201
firstpresbaker.blogspot.com

Calvary Baptist Church
Third & Broadway
541-523-3891
Sundays
10 AM Worship Service
9 AM Sunday School
Thursdays
5:30 - 6 PM
Free Community Dinner
6:15 - 8 PM
Celebrate Recovery
bakercalvarybaptist.com

CHRISTIAN SCIENCE CHURCH
Sunday Service
11:00 AM
www.ChristianScience.com
3rd & Washington, Baker City
541-523-5911

Elkhorn Baptist Church
Sunday School 10 AM
Morning Worship 11 AM
Evening Worship 6 PM
Discovery Kids Worship 6:30 PM
3520 Birch St, Baker City
541-523-4332

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH
Service at 11 am
September through the last Sunday of May
1734 Third Street, Baker City
541-523-3922
firstlutheranbakercity@gmail.com

Baker City Church of the Nazarene
Sunday Worship 9:00 AM & 10:30 AM
Pastor Troy Teeter
1250 Hughes Lane, Baker City
(Corner of Cedar & Hughes)
541-523-3533
www.bakernaz.com

St. Stephen's Episcopal
Services at 9 AM
1st & 3rd Sundays, Holy Eucharist
2nd & 4th Sundays, Morning Prayer
5th Sunday, Morning Prayer
2177 First Street • Baker City
Entrance on 1st Street
Corner Church & First Streets
541-523-4812

ST. BRIGID'S IN THE PINES COMMUNITY CHURCH
11:30 a.m. Services
1st & 3rd Sunday
Holy Eucharist
East Auburn Street, Sumpter
541-523-4812
A Mission of St. Stephen's Episcopal Church in Baker City

St. Francis De Sales Cathedral
Daily Masses:
M, T, Th, F 9 AM
Day Chapel in Cathedral
Wed Daily Mass 9 AM
at St. Alphonsus Chapel
Sat 8 AM at Day Chapel
Baker City Saturday Mass 6 pm
Baker City Sunday Mass 9:30 am
St. Therese in Halfway 2 pm Sat
St. Anthony's in North Powder
11:30 Sun
541-523-4521
Corner of First & Church, Baker City

AGAPE CHRISTIAN CENTER
Sunday Services
10:00 AM & 6:30 PM
South Highway 7,
Baker City
541-523-6586

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