



April 8, 2021

President Joseph R. Biden, Jr.
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500, USA

Petition

We would like Mr. President to be committed to make the country and the world to be places without discriminations against races and any other causes in time of expanded Anti-Asian hate crimes.

Our organization, National Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs of Japan, shortened as BPW Japan, is an Approved Specified NPO and belongs to International Federations of Business & Professional Women which holds a consultative status of UN ECOSOC. We work actively to pursue our goals; to protect the rights of women, and to realize the society where women can work in their local communities, workplaces, and at home with no discriminations against them because of their gender. We also work as an organization member of Liaison Conference for the Promotion of Gender Equality at Cabinet Office of Japanese Government, and collaborate with Cabinet Office to realize Gender Equality, that is Goal 5 of SDGs.

After the recent expansion of racism witnessed throughout the U. S., Ms. Atsuko Toko Fish, who is living in Boston and the founder of JWLI (Japan Women's Leadership Initiative), released a statement of protest below against racial and gender discrimination based on her experience. BPW Japan has been supporting her project by recruiting and sending members to the U.S. as well as publishing the participants' report between 2009 and 2013, aiming to enhance Japanese and Asian women's abilities. We respect diversity and inclusion in order not anyone to be left behind, as in SDGs, and make efforts to realize a gender-equal and all-inclusive society. We strongly agree with the real voice made by Ms. Atsuko Toko Fish, and express protest against any discriminations including race and gender.

We would like to emphasize that Mr. President will raise the issue on the table of U. S.- Japan Summit to strongly commit to the discriminatory situations since the important theme of Olympic and Paralympic Games must be to reaffirm "Diversity & Inclusion." The Games are going to be held in coming July in Tokyo.

Yours truthfully,
President Masako Hiramatsu
BPW Japan
Approved Specified NPO

Statement by Ms. Atsuko Toko Fish

Recently, out for a walk along a narrow road on Cape Cod, I passed a family wearing no masks. I asked them, "Where are your masks?" The father turned to me and said harshly, "Go home." On another occasion I was out walking, followed by young girl on her bike. She asked where I lived, so I pointed out my house. As she stopped and watched me go towards my front door she said "No. You don't belong here."

My name is Atsuko Toko Fish. I am originally from Japan. I came to Boston in 1983 when I was 40 years old and 7 months pregnant, with my husband and 3-year-old daughter. I have been fortunate and am proud of the life I have created in the U.S. I am also proud of my legacy as an Asian woman and a descendent of a Samurai family. I strongly condemn anti-Asian attacks targeting our community, especially women, youth, and the elderly. I am writing this letter to urge you to use your voice and stand with me in collective action.

My husband Larry and I created a family foundation in 1999. The Foundation serves immigrants in Massachusetts, an area I care deeply about as an immigrant myself; high and proven-risk youth; and leadership development for women in Japan. In Japan we have over 100 alumnae. They are women non-profit leaders making major strides towards social change. In my 10-year role as chair of the board of the Asian Task Force Against Domestic Violence (ATASK), I have served Asian women and children who were survivors of domestic violence and other forms of violence. I treasure my work with ATASK's staff and clients, but it is a reminder of this country's long history of systemic racism and gender-based violence.

As an Asian woman, I too have been a target of discrimination and racism. On the street and in the workplace. These experiences are deeply rooted in misogyny and hypersexualization. My fellow Asian women, this is our chance to break our silence. We must use this moment for good, as an opportunity to raise awareness of this issue. We now have the power to change the course of our future and respond. Let us speak up and show our strength. As role models to girls and young women, we must teach by example and show how proud we are of our heritage and rich cultures. America is the land of opportunity, a place where we are welcomed and have a chance to thrive.

I urge you to join me in collective action.

We can make a difference in our future together.

Atsuko Toko Fish
Co-Founder, The Fish Family Foundation



The profile of Ms. Atsuko Toko Fish

She is committed to social activities with her deep affection and consistent policy. The Fish Family Foundation, founded in 1999 in Boston, focuses on supporting immigrants, youngsters at-risk, people with mental illness these days. In 2006, the foundation started JWLI projects. In the wake of 3.11 in 2011, Atsuko established the Japanese Disaster Relief Fund-Boston (JDRFB) to support immediate and mid-term recovery in Tohoku. She visited the effected region several times to assess and evaluate the fast-changing needs of the people and community. In the two years the fund was active for, JDRFB raised approximately \$1 million and distributed 24 grants to 19 organizations and projects working directly in Tohoku.

Atsuko also served as a board chair of the Asian Task Force Against Domestic Violence (ATASK) for over 10 years, and a trustee of Simmons College. She was also a board member of The Boston Foundation (TBF), Health and Development Service (HANDS), the Japan Society of New York (JSNY), and Management Sciences of Health (MSH). She currently serves as an Overseer of the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston (MFA), and an advisory board member of Berklee College of Music.

In recognition of her achievements to promote U.S.-Japan friendship, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan awarded Atsuko with the Foreign Minister's Commendation in 2012. In 2013, the White House named Atsuko a recipient of the Champion of Change Award in recognition of her accomplishments for empowering women in both the U.S. and Japan. In November 2018, Atsuko was conferred by the Emperor of Japan the Order of the Rising Sun, Gold Rays with Rosette for her contribution to the advancement of women's leadership in the Japanese social sector.

** <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/champions/aapi-women>