



## IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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April 27, 2021

### **Statement in support of Appleton's Asian American and Pacific Islander community.**

Diverse & Resilient is an organization serving community members marginalized by violence whether that be domestic and sexual violence or hate violence and community bias. We center our work on those furthest from justice and those further marginalized by systems that were not designed with us or for us. We work for the liberation of all LGBTQ, Black, Indigenous, Asian, Latinx and other People of Color. We stand in solidarity with all movements who fight for liberation—including Black Lives Matter, Indigenous rights, immigrant rights, reproductive rights, and more. Our action today with this statement is in support of the Asian American and Pacific Islander community in Appleton. We are not free until we are all free.

We are saddened and angered over the harm caused by members of the Appleton City Council last week by refusing to take a vote on a resolution condemning the racism, xenophobia, and violence against our Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) community. Alderperson Maiyoua Thao crafted this resolution with input from others in the Asian-American Community. She also sought and received support from Alderpersons Meltzer, Van Zeeland, Fenton, Schultz and Wolff who co-sponsored the bill.

Alderperson Thao created a resolution based on community need. She invited members of the AAPI community to come to Council and share their experiences as this resolution was brought before City Council. We heard heartbreaking stories of Hmong individuals, including children and elders being targeted with hate because of their Asian identities. This resolution was written *by a woman of color for people of color* based on her experiences listening to community.

However, after hearing the testimony of AAPI constituents and allies, Alderperson Bill Siebers decided to send the resolution back to committee to make changes thus halting its passage. Some alderpersons have objected to the language of this resolution stating it is inflammatory. We've even heard from the Council President Matthew Reed that he does not support all these "social justice" issues coming before Council.

At Diverse & Resilient, we know that it is racism that is inflammatory, not the calling out of it. Sexism is also inflammatory. Fighting for social justice issues is at the core of what we do at Diverse & Resilient. In the middle of a pandemic, the Appleton Health Department and the Appleton City Council passed a resolution addressing racism as a public health issue. Diverse & Resilient is a public health agency. We serve the Queer, Trans, Black, Indigenous, Asian, Latinx and all People of Color primarily because we know that these marginalized communities are greatly impacted by barriers in health care. And those barriers include not living safely in a community that values and supports them.

We at Diverse & Resilient call upon the Safety and Licensing Committee and the Appleton City Council to pass the AAPI Resolution submitted by Alderperson Thao exactly as it was written. Trying to change this resolution to provide a white perspective is not only not helpful, it is harmful. The white perspective is often centered. It is time to center the voices of those most impacted by this violence, the AAPI community.

**Two locations:  
408 ½ West Wisconsin Avenue, Appleton WI 54911  
2439 North Holton Street, Milwaukee WI 53212**