



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

of BRITISH COLUMBIA

Honourable David Eby, MLA
Attorney General
Room 232 Parliament Buildings
Victoria, BC V8V 1X4
Canada

April 6, 2021

Dear Minister Eby,

I am writing to you today to ask you and your government to support our request to have May 29 proclaimed as **Anti-Racism Education Day**. As you are aware, there has been a troubling rise in hate crimes perpetrated towards Asian-Canadians both in our province and across Canada. We were horrified when the Vancouver Police Department reported that anti-Asian hate crimes increased by more than 700 per cent between 2019 and 2020.

On Sunday, March 28, I took part in the #StopAsianHate rally on the front steps of the Vancouver Art Gallery to remember the lives lost in the horrific events that took place in Atlanta on March 16th, and to stand against the rise in hate crimes perpetrated against Asian-Canadians.

Anti-Asian hate crimes are among a number of examples that show the need for this province to stand against all forms of racism. For nearly a decade, Canada saw an increasing number of incidents of racism and hate crimes perpetrated against our Muslim and Jewish communities. We must also be conscious of the challenges our South Asian communities face and raise awareness of incidents of racism towards them. Recent events have also shed a horrific light on the prejudices many of our people and institutions perpetuate against Black and Indigenous Canadians.



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Eliminating racism goes beyond party lines, it is a mission that requires the commitment of every member of this House and all British Columbians. On Monday, March 22, members from all sides of the House rose to reaffirm their commitment to eliminating racism and racial discrimination in all its forms, supporting the motion, “Be it resolved that this House recognizes the historic and present-day acts of structural, systemic and institutional racism perpetuated against racialized people and reaffirm our commitment to combatting racism in all forms.”

It is my firm belief that by creating a day for anti-racism education — a day to teach and promote tolerance and acceptance across British Columbia, and to identify all forms of structural, systemic, and institutional racism — we can put our words into action and take some of necessary steps to eliminate racism and intolerance in our province.

I have attached a copy of our proclamation for Anti-Racism Education Day, which we have submitted to the proclamations office.

British Columbia is a place where everyone deserves to feel safe regardless of their cultural, ethnic, racial or religious backgrounds. None of our children should grow up in a province where they have fewer opportunities or feel afraid because of the colour of their skin or their religious beliefs.

As public servants, we have a fundamental duty to fight the spread of hate and misinformation the same way we are fighting against the spread of COVID-19. I invite you to join me in affirming this by supporting our request.

Sincerely,

Teresa Wat
Official Opposition Critic for Tourism, Arts & Culture, & Anti-Racism Initiatives
MLA, Richmond North Centre