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Michigan leaders encourage reporting of anti-Asian American hate crimes amid COVID-19

by Lora Painter | Newschannel 3

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(WWMT/Michigan Attorney General's Office)



KALAMAZOO, Mich. — Anti-Asian American sentiment during the coronavirus disease 2019 pandemic is a growing concern among state leaders.

Although only one had been reported in Michigan as of Thursday, March 26, 2020, Michigan Attorney General Dana Nessel said she believes the crime is under reported.

Nessel joined several state lawmakers and representatives from several organizations from around during a tele-conference Thursday on hate crimes and bias against Asian Americans amid fears of COVID-19. The speakers encouraged Michiganders to report hate crimes. The public can do so using the email hatecrimes@michigan.gov or calling 313-456-0200.

Nessel said she was alarmed by President Donald Trump's use of the term "Chinese virus" during news conferences when referring to COVID-19. The state attorney general said such language fuels bigotry and hatred.

Sen. Stephanie Chang, D-Detroit, who also was on the call, encouraged Michiganders to be civil during this emergency.



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let fear during this uncertain time turn people toward prejudice and hate."

Other speakers during the tele-news conference included: state Rep. Padma Kuppa, D-Troy; Richard Mui of the Asian and Pacific Islander Vote Michigan; and Roland Hwang with the Association of Chinese Americans.

Other participating groups included: the Michigan Asian Pacific American Affairs Commission; Chinese Association of Greater Detroit; Eastern Michigan University - Healthy Asian Americans Project; Michigan Chinese American Coalition; Michigan Chinese Conservatives Alliance; National Association of Asian American Professionals; and Rising Voices of Asian American Families.

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