



March 24, 2021

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**Interim President & CEO**  
Wade Henderson

Dear Representative,

On behalf of The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, a coalition charged by its diverse membership of more than 220 national organizations to promote and protect the civil and human rights of all persons in the United States, I am writing to urge you to co-sponsor Congresswoman Barbara Lee's **House Concurrent Resolution (H. Con. Res.) 19, Urging the establishment of a United States Commission on Truth, Racial Healing, and Transformation**. Today, our nation faces its greatest challenge in the past century, not only about equity and fairness but also about our country's national security. January's violent insurrection, fueled by white supremacy and anti-Semitism, horrified us all. But for those of us who are a part of and work alongside Black, Brown, Asian, Arab, Muslim, Jewish, Sikh, disabled, and LGBTQ communities, the white nationalist violence did not surprise us. Sadly, for the members of our coalition and the people we represent, this violence is not new. Just recently, we have witnessed an increase of violent attacks against Asian American communities since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, most recently with the killing of eight Asian Americans in Georgia.

That is why we support the creation of a U.S. Commission for Truth, Racial Healing, and Transformation as well as H.R. 40, the Commission to Study and Develop Reparation Proposals for African Americans Act introduced by Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee. The longstanding and persistent threat of violent white nationalism, disparities and racial discrimination exposed by COVID-19, and rampant police brutality are the fruit of a poisonous tree of slavery, and structural racism and discrimination. That tree – the tree of racism writ large – must be destroyed root and branch.

A U.S. Commission for Truth, Racial Healing, and Transformation would enable us to reach those roots and ensure that the reparations that must be a part of this country's transformation are part of a foundation for sustainable systemic change. Together, we must confront and reject the big lie — the hierarchy of human value — residing at the very core of our country's founding beliefs, and that continues to drive white nationalist violence and white supremacist policies and practices. Now is the time to create a shared vision for a country as good as its ideals that centers human dignity. A country where all are valued equally regardless of their race, ethnicity, religion, sex, disability, or socioeconomic status. In order to do this, we must reckon with the white supremacy that was present at our founding and continues to infect all of our institutions, policies, and practices.

We cannot truly address white nationalist violence without these truthful reckonings and accountings for what is owed with respect to the ongoing legacy of racism and white supremacy in our country. Reparations are owed. Transformation is required. Generations of denied opportunity through systems and a culture of racial hierarchy cannot be permanently

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disrupted without a nationally coordinated, and community-driven truth, healing, and transformation effort. We ask that you co-sponsor Congresswoman Lee's **H. Con. Res. 19, Urging the establishment of a United States Commission on Truth, Racial Healing, and Transformation.**

Sincerely,



Wade Henderson  
Interim President and CEO



LaShawn Warren  
Executive Vice President for Government Affairs