

President's Advisory Commission on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders Section:

At the end of 2019, President Donald J. Trump [nominated](#) fourteen esteemed individuals to serve on the President's Advisory Commission on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. In January of 2020, the Commissioners were sworn-in at the [White House Lunar New Year](#) celebration by Vice President Mike Pence. Secretary Ross, Secretary Chao, and Secretary of Labor Eugene Scalia also delivered remarks at this very special ceremony along with a [Lunar New Year stamp](#) reveal from the US Postal Service. From January through March, Secretary Chao and the President's Advisory Commission on AAPIs hosted business roundtable discussion and listening sessions across the country, including Silicon Valley, Las Vegas, and [Houston](#).

The world, unfortunately, has changed dramatically since those events. The COVID-19 global pandemic has stolen so many lives at home and around the world. Public health measures to contain the virus have also had painful economic impacts on many Americans. So many entrepreneurs and small business owners in the AAPI community have suffered disproportionately due to stay-at-home orders as a result of the coronavirus. Furthermore, AAPIs across our nation are keenly aware of increased anti-AAPI sentiments, particularly in the most densely populated urban areas. Nevertheless, we are grateful for and proud of the hundreds of thousands of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders who are employed in our healthcare industry and have served on the front-line workers battling the pandemic.

The President's Advisory Commission on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders hosted their inaugural open meeting during AAPI Heritage Month. Even before their first meeting, the Commissioners have been hard at work, convening regular subcommittee meetings to address concerns of the impact of COVID-19 on the AAPI community, particularly small business owners. Before much of the country began to shelter-in-place, the Commission hosted several in-person roundtable discussions around the country to hear directly from AAPIs about the challenges they face. Most recently, PAC-AAPI held its first virtual AAPI Business Town Hall and will host more in the future to both deliver information to and receive feedback from AAPI leaders.

The President's Executive Order outlines nine specific areas on which the Commission is tasked to craft a report. Those areas include developing strategies to increase participation of AAPI enterprises in partnerships between the public and private sectors, training a new generation of skilled workers who are in demand throughout every industry sector, and conducting an analysis of the United States Pacific Island territories to help them diversify and grow their economies. At its inaugural meeting, the President's Advisory Commission announced the formulation of four specific subcommittees in addition to the subcommittee focused on COVID-19: Passing the Torch, Breaking the Glass Ceiling, AAPI Women in Leadership, and Bridging the Income Gap.

We look forward to the great work of this Commission and we are appreciative of their advocacy for the 22 million Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders and more than 1.9 million AAPI-owned businesses. Their work on behalf of the AAPI community is more important than ever and we want to echo the words of Secretary Ross at the Commissioners' open meeting: "We hope the Commission can be a conduit to the AAPI community so that it can take advantage of the programs that have been created. The AAPI business community will be instrumental as our

country strives to rebuild our domestic supply chains, our industrial base, the workers they employ, and the communities they enrich...the entrepreneurial spirit of the AAPI community will lead to new innovations that will save lives, capitalize on market opportunities, and return our country to prosperity.”