



For Immediate Release

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Councilmember LaCava Stands with AAPI Leaders, La Jolla Business Owners, SDPD in Support of 'Safe Place' Initiative

San Diego — Today, alongside fellow community and City leaders, Councilmember LaCava promoted the adoption of SDPD's AAPI 'Safe Places' initiative by La Jolla businesses.

Launched in April 2021, the 'Safe Place' program was initially created to help identify safe locations and resources for victims of LGBTQ+ hate crimes. SDPD later expanded the program in June 2021 to provide resources and promote safe places for the AAPI community as well. Businesses that step up to participate in this initiative will display a window decal, identifying their establishments as a safe place for individuals who feel threatened or are victims of hate crimes or harassment.

"Racism and discrimination are not bound by political or physical boundaries. I am proud of La Jolla merchants that are joining others across our City in support of the Safe Space program," **said Councilmember Joe LaCava, who represents communities in San Diego Council District 1.** "This collaboration between local business and SDPD helps foster safety to those who work, live and shop in our neighborhoods. Today's action is not a beginning or an end, but continuing leadership that we will not tolerate hate in any neighborhood."

"Everybody has a vested role in making all members of the community feel safe, and educational programs, such as the 'Safe Place' initiative, play a vital role in doing just that," **said Sergeant Lem Sainsanoy, a liaison for the SDPD Multi-Cultural Community Relations Office.** "We all must do our part to combat racism."

Jodi Rudick, executive director of the La Jolla Village Merchants Association (LJVMA), said, "La Jolla Village strives to create a welcoming and inclusive atmosphere for all. Diversity is a core value of LJVMA and our website includes a Commitment to Diversity. We represent approximately 1100 businesses that employ around 5500 people. We are a community made of different genders, religions, experiences, perspectives, backgrounds, and so much more."

“San Diego has a growing AAPI community whose members are experiencing increasing discrimination and hate crimes,” **said Natasha Wong, a member of Mayor Todd Gloria’s Asian-Pacific Islander (API) Advisory Group.** “La Jolla is not immune to racism and discrimination. Everyone needs to do their part to make sure we stop hate and discrimination. We hope the Safe Place program becomes an easy tool for everyone to report hate crimes.”

Councilmember Joe LaCava represents San Diego City Council District 1, which includes the communities of Carmel Valley, Del Mar Heights, Del Mar Mesa, La Jolla, Pacific Highlands Ranch, Torrey Hills, Torrey Pines, and University City.

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