



Statement in Support of NJ Reparations Task Force

February 2022

AAPI Montclair is proud to join a coalition led by the NJ Institute of Social Justice in support of legislation that would create a Reparations Task Force requiring the State of NJ to study its role in slavery and make policy recommendations.

This process is critical in educating New Jerseyans about the deep and often forgotten history of slavery and its aftermath of structural racism, and beginning the process of repairing that harm. California recently became the first state to pass reparations task force legislation; New Jersey should be the second.

We know reparations are possible because it happened for our community.

AAPI Montclair is intentionally making this announcement during Black History Month and the 80th Anniversary of Remembrance Day--the Day President Franklin D. Roosevelt ordered over 120,000 Americans of Japanese ancestry to incarceration camps for over 4 years. In 1988, after a U.S. Commission was formed, the U.S. government formally apologized to the Japanese American community and authorized payments of \$20,000 to each formerly incarcerated individual.

New Jersey's over 1 million Asian Americans owe so much of our progress to the Civil Rights Movement. We also share beautiful and often overlooked histories of Asian American and Black solidarity, exemplified by Yuri Kochiyama, Grace Lee Boggs, Ram Manohar Lohia, and others. Our country and state have waited too long to formally acknowledge the grave wrong of slavery and must take steps to repair that harm, as was done for Japanese Americans.

Learn more about this campaign and take action for a NJ Reparations Task Force by urging Senate President Scutari and Assembly Speaker Coughlin to hold a hearing on this bill by going to: www.400yearsnj.org.