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## THE AMA-USA COMMUNITY STANDS TOGETHER IN SOLIDARITY WITH THE VICTIMS OF MASS SHOOTINGS ACROSS THE U.S.

This weekend, we witnessed yet again the real-life consequences of hateful rhetoric against people of color, this time targeted at the Mexican-American and Hispanic community of Texas, as well as against innocent residents of Dayton, Ohio and Chicago, Illinois. Children, mothers, grandfathers were wounded and lives were lost because of the color of their skin, their native language, or their presumed places of origin.

As should be the case with all mass shootings, this weekend's events are a time for mourning and reflection, but also a call to action if we expect to put an end to these all-too-frequent catastrophic events. Every time an elected official or figure of authority expresses words of contempt and actions of intolerance, they implicitly pave a path to tragedies like this weekend's.

It is time to take a strong and unequivocally stand against any and all types of racism and xenophobia: "thoughts and prayers" are not enough. Every time you listen to an acquaintance say something demeaning to the Hispanic community, question them. Every time you witness an act of racism, say something. We, the members of the American Mexican Association, support preventative, anti-discriminatory, and anti-hate legislation and sensible gun-control measures that prevent access to military-grade weapons for civilians and stem the flow of arms across borders. We urge you to call your local, state, and federal representatives to demand they take immediate action to stop acts of hate.

El Paso is close to Mexico's history, community and heart—home to almost 550,000 Hispanics and over 500,000 people of Mexican origin. Additionally, immigrants in El Paso pay about \$1.1B in local, state, and federal taxes annually and have a spending power of \$3.8 billion. They fill labor shortages in the construction, manufactural, transportation and warehousing, and health care and social assistance fields, to name a few.

But beyond the economic dynamism of El Paso—as a result of the rich contributions of the city’s vast immigrant community—the closely knit ties between El Paso and neighboring Ciudad Juárez have been deeply hurt because of the violence they witnessed this weekend. No words, as strong as a public condemnation can be, will ever suffice for the human loss our Mexican-American community mourns today, product of rising mass shootings and domestic terrorism across the country driven by hate, xenophobia, and racism against communities of color.

But more important than standing and acting against hatred, the answer lies in compassion, understanding, and mutual respect across and within communities. As a growing segment of the population of the United States, we must act together to lift each other, and to recognize and propagate the positive contributions we make to this nation every day. We must motivate future generations to continue creating spaces where every voice and every person is represented and heard.

Our mission is to be the voice of the communities of Mexican origin in the U.S., but to be the voice, we must first come together and speak up.

#TogetherWeAreStronger