In the spirit of community and healing, the *Korean American Bar Association of Southern California* (KABA) and the *Japanese American Bar Association* (JABA) issue this joint statement in response to the controversy over the Comfort Women Memorial in Glendale, California, and the lawsuit *Gingery et al. v. City of Glendale*, which seeks the removal of the Memorial.

The plaintiffs raise two primary allegations: (1) the City of Glendale's Memorial "infringes upon the federal government's power to exclusively conduct the foreign affairs of the United States, and violates the Supremacy Clause of the U.S. Constitution"; and (2) the Memorial's approval by the city council did not satisfy the requirements of Glendale's Municipal Code. In raising these allegations, the plaintiffs' complaint includes a dismissive history of the Comfort Women that skews facts in favor of the plaintiffs' claims and minimizes the Comfort Women's suffering during World War II. For example, the plaintiffs' allegation that "[o]fficials of the Japanese government assert that the Japanese military and Japanese Imperial government were not responsible for or directly involved in the recruitment of comfort women" overlooks the Japanese Government's own acknowledgement in 1993 that such recruitment "involve[d] . . . the military authorities of the day."

As Americans and lawyers, we have faith that justice ultimately will be served through our legal system. Regardless of the lawsuit's outcome, no one should forget the immeasurable pain suffered by the Comfort Women during World War II. The Memorial should not be used as a symbol to encourage hate of any kind or the expression of hostility towards others. By the same token, a lawsuit that seeks the removal of the Memorial should not foster ethnic division and threaten to unravel the fabric of the progressive, multiethnic community we have worked hard to build.

Korean Americans and Japanese Americans live, work, and socialize side-by-side within the rich diversity of Los Angeles. The history of our two organizations reflects the interdependence of our communities. Before the establishment of KABA, Korean American attorneys joined and were leaders of JABA, including one of JABA's early presidents. Korean American and Japanese American attorneys populate the membership ranks of both organizations. In the period leading up to the Los Angeles riots of 1992, KABA and JABA worked tirelessly together and with others to build a multiethnic coalition that calmed the community and stood against racism.

We are neither anti-Japan nor anti-Korea. Rather, we are Asian Americans committed to maintaining a community that celebrates diversity, promotes compassion, and builds friendship on a foundation of honesty and mutual respect. While we cannot ignore the unchangeable history that brought us to the present, we can decide to work together for a

better tomorrow. It is in this spirit that KABA and JABA unequivocally state that we will not allow the Glendale controversy to divide our communities. We will continue to work together – as we have for many decades – towards unity and a better society for everyone.

A copy of the lawsuit can be viewed here:
http://www.popehat.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/Gingery-Complaint.pdf