

PRESS RELEASE



Anchorage Assembly Leadership Statement on Terroristic Threatening Standoff and Use of Racial Slur

April 18, 2022

In a police standoff downtown last Friday, a man experiencing a mental health crisis used a racial slur and threatened violence towards Indigenous members of our community. In the coverage of the story, several media outlets repeated the racial slur, inflicting further harm and repeating an inaccurate and racist stereotype. In response Chair Suzanne LaFrance and Vice Chair Christopher Constant have issued the following statement:

As the Assembly Leadership, we want to speak out against terroristic threats. Threats of violence against any members of our community are unacceptable, and we can't let the moment pass without making this clear. We also do not accept the perpetuation of racial slurs and stereotypes.

We believe that our community is full of rich and diverse cultures that should be celebrated and acknowledged for their important contributions to our society, culture, government, schools, and economy. If you would like to learn more about the contributions of Indigenous cultures to Anchorage, we encourage you to attend the premiere viewing of Culture Stories: Anchorage Indigenous Place Making Movement on Thursday April 28, 6:30 pm in the Wilda Marston Theatre. More at: <https://fnx.org/>

Furthermore, we recognize that this time of year can be challenging for many who experience mental health challenges. If you or someone you know are experiencing thoughts of self-harm or suicide, please reach out for help. 24-hour/7 days a week crisis support is available by calling 907-563-3200 or texting NAMI to 741741. If it is an emergency, contact 911 and ask for the Mobile Crisis Team. Additional resources are available at the National Alliance on Mental Illness Anchorage: <https://www.namianchorage.org/>

Our hearts go out to all who have been negatively affected by this incident.

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