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For immediate release

Seattle, WA. As we watch leaders of our nation, county, and city deny claim after claim of sexual abuse and harassment, API Chaya affirms its commitment to serving survivors of violence, particularly from LGBTQ, immigrant, and marginalized communities. We do not claim to know the truth of the allegations against President Trump, Sheriff Urquhart, or Mayor Murray. We do know that it takes a great amount of courage for survivors of sexual assault to share their experiences. According to the National Sexual Violence Resource Center, rape and child sexual abuse are among the most underreported crimes. As an organization founded on the practice of believing survivors, including survivors of childhood sexual abuse who often no longer have access to physical evidence from their abuse, we feel the impact when cases are dismissed as it heightens fears around reporting and seeking help.

API Chaya, in looking towards more community-based solutions and approaches to seeking justice for survivors of sexual assault, is less concerned with the legal outcomes of the lawsuits filed against leaders in our midst, acknowledging that the vast majority of sexual assault survivors never see justice through criminal legal systems. Rather, we are hopeful that all survivors find healing, peace and a sense of justice through the validation of their experiences and access to meaningful resources to achieve wellness.

In a time when hateful speech is on the rise and anti-LGBTQ language is surfacing around Mayor Murray’s case, API Chaya also affirms its commitment to serving lesbian, bisexual, gay, queer, transgender and gender non-conforming survivors of violence. We decry the increase in hateful, homophobic speech, as sexual abuse is present in all communities. In addition, we find that victimization is more likely when increased vulnerabilities are present, such as disability, being a young person, poverty and lack of safe or affordable housing. In these harsh times, we believe that leadership from survivors in marginalized communities is increasingly necessary.

April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month. At API Chaya, we are in the midst of providing a support group for survivors of sexual assault focused on creative arts and healing. API Chaya is an organization that serves domestic violence, sexual assault and human trafficking survivors. Our services are free and confidential. We were born out of a community need to serve South Asian, Asian and Pacific Islander survivors and today serve all immigrant and refugee communities in our human trafficking program.

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