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Councilmember John S. Lee
Twelfth District

April 30, 2022

Dear Friends :

Greetings to everyone attending the leadership conference commemorating the 30th anniversary of the Los Angeles Riots. Also, a special thank you to the Korean American Coalition and the Council of Korean Americans for co-hosting this important event.

30 years have passed since the 1992 Los Angeles Riots, but the wounds and pain of that day still remain. My family's small business in Koreatown, like many other Korean businesses, experienced significant financial loss, property damage, and vandalism. We saw mainstream media and leaders pit us against each other and push the narrative of conflict and competition rather than deal with the uncomfortable truth of hundreds of years of racial and social inequality in America for African-Americans and for minorities everywhere in the United States. At the time, Korean immigrant communities, like many other Asian communities were facing tremendous racism and discrimination and while our community has thrived much since then, acknowledging this aspect of the Korean immigrant experience helps us better understand the plight of the African-American community and lets us see how our experiences were similarly hurt by racism.

We still have issues that must be solved together. From a young age, my parents taught me the value of community service and giving back to the city and country that had given us an opportunity for a better life. Following the riots, I knew that I wanted to dedicate my life to bringing positive change to our city.

Sincerely,

John S. Lee
Councilmember, Twelfth District