

## **MONG EQUALITY COMMITTEE**

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Good afternoon, my fellow Mong and friends!

We have gathered here today because there has been much unrest and turmoil in the Mong community in the past five to six months. We have not been able to rest peacefully or carry out our daily activities normally because certain individuals within our Mong community have been on a campaign to eliminate the Mong Leng written language.

**But we say to these individuals (Councilman Dai Thao, Kongsue Xiong, Kang Yee Khang, and Sai Nu Vang) ... We stand strong, united, and we will not let you sow disharmony, hatred, and division in our Mong community! We are here today to demand a public apology from each of you!**

On September 21, 2021, Councilman Dai Thao initiated a campaign to silence Mong Leng. On his Facebook timeline, he stated that Hmoob (H-m-o-o-b) & Hmong (H-m-o-n-g) are standard terms while the Mong Leng equivalent (M-o-o-b) is not. He later talked about how “M-o-o-b” is not an inclusive word, meaning that it does not refer to both Mong Leng and Mong Der in an attempt to mislead non-Hmong and the unsuspecting individual.

Shortly after the ribbon-cutting ceremony, in early September 2021, Kongsue Xiong, the VP of the Hmong Advisory Committee of The Minnesota China Friendship Garden Society publicly proclaimed on social media that he was against the decision that the Hmong Advisory Committee made with using the word “M-o-o-b” inscribed on a rock at the Saint Paul-Changsha China Friendship Garden.

At a public engagement event, organized by Councilman Dai Thao on 11/23/2021, both Kang Yee Khang and Xai Nu Vang also joined in on Councilman Dai Thao and Kongsue Xiong's baseless claim.

All four together, they launched an attempt to eliminate the word "M-o-o-b" that led to heated discussions between family members and friends privately, on social media such as Facebook and YouTube, Mong telephone conference calls, and on Mong media outlets for the past five-six months. Consequently, many Mong Leng became targets of bigotry and hatred.

Surprisingly, after months of heated discussions all over the world within the Mong community, due to the outpour of support from both Mong Leng and Mong Der, the efforts of the Mong Equality Committee, and the wisdom of Director Mike Hahm of the Saint Paul Parks & Recreation Department, we are happy to hear that Councilman Dai Thao reversed his position to support keeping "M-o-o-b" engraved on the rock at the Saint Paul-Changsha China Friendship Garden.

However, what continues to weigh heavily on the Mong community is Councilman Dai Thao's statement as if he was part of the solution. He stated, "... I am proud the Ward 1 Office was able to work with Director Hahm to ensure transparent community engagement going forward ...."

**Where is his acknowledgement for his grave misconduct of inciting division within the Mong community and attempting to get rid of the Mong Leng dialect?**

We would have preferred Councilman Dai Thao to do the right thing without us having to call him out. However, since he will not do the right thing, we, the Mong Equality Committee and all those members of the Mong community who have been hurt by him and his accomplices (Kongsue Xiong, Kang Yee Khang, and Sai Nu Vang) now call upon them to help heal our community immediately.

Each of you have done enough harm! Councilman Dai Thao, Kongsue Xiong, Kang Yee Khang, and Sai Nu Vang!

**You must issue a public apology to the whole Mong community or you will go down in our Mong history as bigots and those who attempted to drive a wedge between Mong Leng and Mong Der.**

**Do the right thing and apologize!**

Lastly, my fellow Mong and friends. **Thank you** for standing for mutual respect, dignity, inclusion, unity, and equality within our Mong community! **Thank you** for the outpour of support in helping to bring to light the unfortunate events that have occurred in our community due to the selfish acts of a few Mong individuals. **Together**, we will stand united and we will bring transparency, clarification, and accountability to those who chose to denigrate and sow disharmony in our community. **Thank you** for coming out this afternoon.