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2025/08/04 APA Justice Monthly Meeting

The next APA Justice monthly meeting will be held on Monday, August 4, 2025, starting at 1:55 pm ET.

In addition to updates from:

- **Judith Teruya**, Executive Director, Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus (CAPAC)
- **Joanna YangQing Derman**, Program Director, Advancing Justice | AAJC
- **Gisela Perez Kusakawa**, Executive Director, Asian American Scholar Forum (AASF)

We are honored by and welcome the following distinguished speakers:

- **Al Green**, Member, U.S. Congress (invited)
- **Munira Abdullahi**, Member, Ohio House of Representatives
- **Guangya Liu**, Member, North Carolina House of Representatives
- **Min Fan**, Executive Director, US Heartland China Association

The virtual monthly meeting is by invitation only. It is closed to the press. If you wish to join, either one time or for future meetings, please contact one of the co-organizers of APA Justice

- **Steven Pei 白先慎**, **Vincent Wang 王文奎**, and **Jeremy Wu 胡善庆** - or send a message to contact@apajustice.org.

Asian American Scholar Forum (AASF) hosted Asian American Pioneer Medal Symposium and Ceremony at Stanford University on July 25-27, 2025. Picture provided by **Vincent Wang**, Co-Organizer of APA Justice.



Ohio's Pending Alien Land Bills



Ohio State Representative **Munira Abdullahi** is a confirmed invited speaker at the APA Justice monthly meeting on August 4, 2025. We have requested her to update us on House Bill 1 and Senate Bill 88 in Ohio, as well as several bills targeting immigrant communities and people of color this year as well.

House Bill 1 and Senate Bill 88 seeks to restrict land ownership by foreign governments and nationals from “adversary” nations—particularly China—within 25 miles of military and critical infrastructure sites, citing national security concerns. Opponents argue the bill is overly broad, potentially banning ownership across nearly the entire state, and unjustly targeting ordinary

immigrants and visa holders. Critics—including lawmakers, legal advocates, and hundreds of Ohio residents—warn the bill promotes racial profiling, echoes historical discrimination, and violates constitutional rights. A key forced-sale provision was removed, but the bill still faces widespread opposition and potential legal challenges. Read the *Ohio Capital Journal* report: <https://bit.ly/4mh5m7J>

We thank Ohio State Representative **Juanita Brent** for bringing these pending bills to our attention during the APA Justice monthly meeting on June 2, 2025. Rep. Brent, the daughter of an immigrant, provided a comprehensive overview of six pending legislative bills in Ohio that raise serious concerns about discrimination against immigrants—particularly those from countries such as China and Korea. These bills reflect a broader national trend and illustrate the state's overreach into matters that should fall under federal jurisdiction.

- **House Bill 1 and Senate Bill 88** have drawn significant attention. They would prohibit individuals from countries the U.S. designates as adversaries from owning homes or businesses, especially near critical infrastructure. Similar legislation has been introduced in 31 other states.
- **Senate Bill 281** would require hospitals to allow federal immigration enforcement officers entry. Hospitals that fail to comply could lose grant funding and have their Medicaid provider agreements affected.
- **Senate Bill 282** proposes that courts consider a person's immigration status when determining sentencing and bail.
- **House Bill 200** would create criminal penalties for unlawful presence, including fines and a 72-hour window for voluntary departure. It is currently facing opposition in the Public Safety Committee.
- **House Bill 42** mandates that certain agencies collect and report data on individuals' citizenship or immigration status. It has received one hearing in the Government Oversight Committee.
- **House Bill 26** would require law enforcement to share information about arrestees with federal immigration authorities. It would also prohibit Ohio municipalities from providing benefits to undocumented immigrants. Municipalities that fail to comply could risk losing their Local Government Fund allocations.

State Rep. Brent emphasized that these bills effectively legalize discrimination and hate—an alarming development. As a country, we have witnessed the consequences of such discrimination in the past. These proposed laws open the door to legalized bias based solely on a person's country of origin or immigration status.

State Rep. Brent stressed that immigration is a federal issue and not the responsibility of individual states. By pursuing these bills, Ohio is overstepping its authority. None of these proposals address legitimate state-level concerns, and many are likely unconstitutional. Nonetheless, they must be challenged at the state level.

Revival of China Initiative Harms US Science and Security



According to the [South China Morning Post](#), the US House of Representatives is poised to advance a key spending bill that could revive the controversial “China Initiative” – a program that unfairly targeted Chinese American researchers, derailed careers and devastated lives long after it was ended in 2022. The Fiscal Year 2026 Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies (CJS) appropriations bill does not name the program directly, but language in the accompanying report calls for its re-establishment to “maintain America’s competitive edge” and “counter China’s malign ambitions to steal American research”.

A scheduled committee meeting to debate the bill was cancelled on July 23, but experts said the provision was likely to remain as the legislation moved towards the Senate.

“As a victim of the past China Initiative, I am disheartened by ongoing efforts in Congress to reinstate the misguided programme,” said **Gang Chen** 陈刚, a mechanical engineer at MIT who was arrested in 2021 before all charges were dropped.

“It is not only discriminatory, but also harms America’s ability to attract top global talent – ultimately weakening, not strengthening, our national security,” he said in [a statement](#) released by the Asian American Scholar Forum, a US-based non-profit organization that advocates for academic belonging and equity in Asian-American and Pacific Islander communities.

Professor Chen is among more than 1,000 US researchers and university staff led by Stanford physicists **Steven Kivelson** and **Peter Michelson** in signing [a letter](#) that urged lawmakers to remove the provision. The letter, dated July 22, warned that reviving the initiative would deter talent, damage innovation and inadvertently advance China’s own recruitment efforts.

Read the *South China Morning Post* report: <https://bit.ly/4omPcvo>

Over 50 civil society organizations including [Defending Rights & Dissent](#) have also sent a joint letter urging the full Appropriations committee to strike the provision.

Dr. Gee-Kung Chang: "From Injustice to Integrity: A Journey Through Fire"



Robert Fisher, Partner at Nixon Peabody, was the attorney who successfully defended MIT Professor **Gang Chen** 陈刚. He spoke at the APA Justice monthly meeting on May 5, 2025, and introduced Professor **Gee-Kung (GK) Chang** 張繼昆, whom Robert also represented with colleague **Brian Kelly**.

Rob said this is a critical time for the country and for the Asian American community. Although the China Initiative was officially ended, similar prosecutions are still occurring—particularly targeting professors, scientists, and professionals with ties to China.

Rob explained that GK was accused of wire fraud based on allegations that he and a colleague from ZTE conspired to misuse J-1 visa students, supposedly having them work at ZTE while being paid by Georgia Tech.

However, the defense pointed out that, even according to the government's own account, the students were working at Georgia Tech. The indictment was fundamentally flawed—it failed to allege that the financial component was the actual object of the fraud. As a result, the court dismissed most of the charges, leaving only one remaining.

That final charge—visa fraud—was also challenged. GK had no role in the visa application process, and Georgia Tech had never provided training on compliance or rules regarding foreign collaboration. Without knowledge or training, there could not have been intent to defraud. Eventually, the government dropped the last remaining charge. GK was fully exonerated after a four-year ordeal under the China Initiative.

GK's case highlights a broader issue: many professors were once encouraged to collaborate with China, only to later face prosecution as political attitudes shifted. These retroactive investigations have damaged careers and chilled academic collaboration, especially within the Asian American community.

Professor GK Chang shared his personal account of a harrowing legal ordeal during the May 2025 APA Justice monthly meeting. Quoting his written statement titled **"From Injustice to Integrity: A Journey Through Fire,"** GK told his story that "I stand before you today, not as a victim of injustice, but as a witness to the power of integrity, forged in the fiercest fires of adversity. My journey was never just about reclaiming my freedom — it was about turning pain into a higher purpose, one that lights the way for those still suffering injustice."

GK was born in China in 1947, moved to Taiwan as a baby during the Chinese Civil War, and came to the U.S. in 1970 for graduate studies in physics. He earned his Ph.D. from the University of California, Riverside in 1976 and became a U.S. citizen in 1981.

With 23 years of experience in industry—including leadership roles at Bell Labs, Bellcore, Telcordia, and OpNext—GK became a pioneer in optoelectronic integration and fiber-optic communications, holding over 50 patents. He received multiple awards, including the R&D 100 Award and the Bellcore President's Award.

In 2002, he joined Georgia Tech as an Eminent Scholar Chair Professor. There, he led major NSF-sponsored research on fiber-wireless networks that laid the foundation for 5G and 6G technologies. He advised 30 Ph.D. students, published over 500 papers, and earned Fellow honors from IEEE and the Optical Society of America. He was recognized as a distinguished alumnus of National Tsing Hua University and received Georgia Tech's Distinguished Faculty Achievement Award.

On March 24, 2021, GK's life was changed forever when nine federal agents arrested him at home without warning, accusing him of conspiracy and wire fraud under the now-defunct "China Initiative." Despite his clean record and decades of academic and industry contributions, he was publicly indicted without prior notice. Though released on a low bail, the arrest devastated his personal and professional life. The media portrayed him as guilty, his reputation collapsed, and colleagues and friends distanced themselves, leaving him isolated and emotionally shattered.

Despite being wrongfully indicted, GK stood firm, relying on his values, family, and a few loyal allies. Through careful review of over a million pages of documents with his legal team of Rob Fisher and Brian Kelly, he uncovered major flaws in the case against him: factual inaccuracies, missing evidence, and prosecutorial misconduct. The charges lacked legal grounding and were based partly on the testimony of a disgruntled former student. The government misunderstood academic norms and pursued the case without proof of intent, fraud, or personal gain—revealing a deeply flawed and unjust prosecution.

Faced with multiple plea offers, including one to plead guilty to a single misdemeanor, GK refused to admit guilt for a crime he did not commit. He chose to fight on despite financial strain. A pivotal moment came in August 2023, when a prosecutor admitted in court that GK had not gained any money from the alleged offenses—contradicting the indictment's claims. This crucial fact had been withheld from the grand jury, exposing serious prosecutorial misconduct

and strengthening his case for vindication.

The case shifted dramatically after the court dismissed 9 of the 10 charges on March 1, 2024. Empowered by this decision, GK demanded a speedy trial under the Sixth Amendment, confident of full vindication. However, the emotional strain took a serious toll: he suffered a heart attack in May 2024 and underwent emergency surgery. As he recovered, his focus turned not just to clearing his name, but reclaiming his dignity. The ordeal was nearing its end, but had already come at a profound personal cost.

The final charge was dismissed on April 14, 2025, through a motion filed by the prosecutor and approved by the judge, fully exonerating GK without a trial. Yet, the long-awaited freedom brought no joy. After four years of legal battles, he was left emotionally scarred, physically worn, and financially depleted. Professionally, the damage was irreversible—four crucial years of innovation and contribution at the peak of his career were lost forever.

Despite the pain, the ordeal brought GK clarity and a renewed sense of purpose. He emerged not only as a survivor but as a seeker of truth, justice, and understanding. His faith in the justice system was shaken, as he came to see its vulnerability to error, bias, and ambition. He now believes that justice does not automatically protect the innocent and must be actively pursued with courage and conviction. Upholding what is right requires strength, even in the face of overwhelming adversity—because justice is never guaranteed, only earned.

Quoting Dr. **Martin Luther King, Jr.**, GK concluded his statement by stating:

"I share my testimony, 'A Journey Through Fire,' not for sympathy, but as a warning—and as a beacon.

"To those suffering similar injustice:

"You are not alone.

"And by standing together,

"we can help ensure that no one else must endure this tribulation again."

Read the story of Professor GK Chang: <https://bit.ly/GeeKungChang>. Read his statement "[From Injustice to Integrity: A Journey Through Fire](#)." Watch the video of Robert Fisher and GK Chang at the APA Justice monthly meeting on May 5, 2025: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lbh1EkabX6I> (19:00).

Third District Court Blocks Trump's Birthright Citizenship Restrictions



According to [AP](#), [Newsweek](#), [The Hill](#), and multiple media reports, U.S. District Judge **Leo Sorokin** of Massachusetts blocked the Trump administration from ending birthright citizenship for the children of undocumented or temporary immigrants. This marks the third court ruling to do so, despite a recent Supreme Court decision limiting nationwide injunctions.

Judge Sorokin found the executive order unconstitutional in [a 23-page ruling](#). He said a patchwork approach to the birthright order would not protect the states in part because a substantial number of people move between states. He also blasted the Trump administration, saying it had failed to explain how a narrower injunction would work. “That is, they have never addressed what renders a proposal feasible or workable, how the defendant agencies might implement it without imposing material administrative or financial burdens on the plaintiffs, or how it squares with other relevant federal statutes,” the judge wrote. “In fact, they have characterized such questions as irrelevant to the task the Court is now undertaking. The defendants’ position in this regard defies both law and logic.”

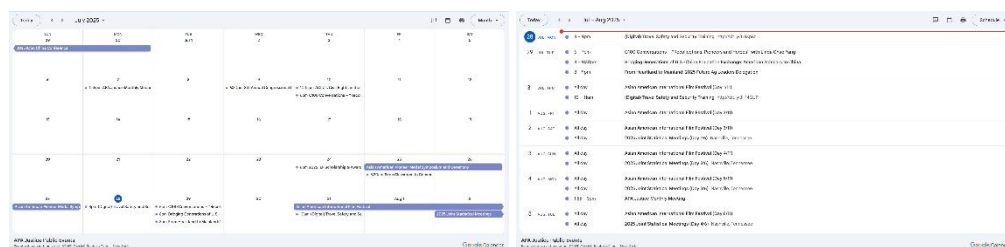
Sorokin acknowledged his order would not be the last word on birthright citizenship. Trump and

his administration “are entitled to pursue their interpretation of the Fourteenth Amendment, and no doubt the Supreme Court will ultimately settle the question,” Sorokin wrote. “But in the meantime, for purposes of this lawsuit at this juncture, the Executive Order is unconstitutional.” For now, Trump's order remains blocked.

Judge Sorokin's ruling aligned with the [U.S. District Court in New Hampshire](#) and the [9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals](#) covering the western states including California. The issue will likely be decided by the Supreme Court.

News and Activities for the Communities

1. APA Justice Community Calendar



Upcoming Events:

2025/07/28 (Digital) Travel Safety and Security Training
2025/07/29 C100 Conversations – “Recollections, Pioneers and Heroes” with Linda Chao Yang
2025/07/29 From Heartland to Mainland: 2025 Future Ag Leaders Delegation
2025/07/29 Bridging Generations of U.S.-China Education Exchange: American Scholars to China
2025/07/31 (Digital) Travel Safety and Security Training
2025/07/31-08/10 Asian American International Film Festival
2025/08/02-07 2025 Joint Statistical Meetings
2025/08/04 APA Justice Monthly Meeting

Visit <https://bit.ly/3XD61qV> for event details.

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APA Justice Task Force is a non-partisan platform to build a sustainable ecosystem that addresses racial profiling concerns and to facilitate, inform, and advocate on selected issues related to justice and fairness for the Asian Pacific American community. For more information, please refer to the new APA Justice website under development

at www.apajusticetaskforce.org. We value your feedback. Please send your comments to contact@apajustice.org.

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