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Congresswoman Grace Meng Remarks at APA Justice Monthly Meeting



Congresswoman **Grace Meng** gave remarks during the APA Justice monthly meeting on October 7, 2024.

Congresswoman Grace Meng is serving her sixth term representing New York's Sixth Congressional District in the U.S. House of Representatives. She is the first and only Asian American Member of Congress from New York State. Grace serves on the House Appropriations Committee, where she is New York's senior member and is the Vice Ranking Member.

During the monthly meeting, Congresswoman Meng delivered a heartfelt message, beginning by expressing gratitude for the invitation and recognition of her fellow colleagues. She gave special praise to Texas State Representative **Gene Wu** for his leadership and advocacy for the Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) community during these challenging times.

Congresswoman Meng also highlighted the critical role of Chair **Judy Chu**, Senator **Mazie Hirono**, and the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus (CAPAC), who have been working tirelessly to combat discriminatory legislation.

Congresswoman Meng voiced her concern over the intensifying anti-China rhetoric in Congress. She specifically mentioned the recent attempt by House Republicans to pass a bill that could reinstate the China Initiative, which unfairly targeted individuals of Chinese descent

under the guise of national security. While the bill is unlikely to pass in the Senate, Congresswoman Meng emphasized that such efforts continue to harm the AAPI community.

In response, Congresswoman Meng and CAPAC urged Congressional leadership to remove language that would restart the China Initiative from the final government spending bill for 2025. She commended organizations like the Asian American Scholar Forum, Advancing Justice | AAJC, and APA Justice for their advocacy during “China Week” and beyond, and gave a special mention to **Casey Lee** for her contributions.

Congresswoman Meng also raised alarm about Project 2025, a Republican policy roadmap that includes reinstating the China Initiative and ending family-based immigration, a move that would disproportionately impact Asian American communities.

Project 2025 also calls for cutting funding to vital programs like food assistance and healthcare, directly affecting vulnerable populations, including the 4.5 million AAPI Medicaid recipients. It also targets reductions in the H1B visa program, which would harm skilled workers, many of whom are from AAPI communities.

Congresswoman Meng stressed that these issues are not about party politics but about safeguarding the future and well-being of our community.

Despite these challenges, Congresswoman Meng remains committed to fighting discriminatory policies and advancing progressive initiatives.

One such initiative is the creation of the National Museum of Asian Pacific American History in Washington DC. The first legislation to establish the museum as part of the Smithsonian Institution was passed in 2022, and Congresswoman Meng is excited to continue working on this project. The museum will preserve and celebrate the rich histories and cultures of Asian Pacific Americans.

In closing, Congresswoman Meng reflected on the hardships the AAPI community has faced, particularly during the pandemic, and urged continued unity and collaboration to address the challenges ahead.

We thank Congresswoman Meng for her leadership and public service. Watch her talk at <https://bit.ly/3Ysvaof> (8:08). A summary of the October 7 monthly meeting is being finalized at this time.

Texas Rep. Gene Wu Urges Community Vigilance, Solidarity, and Action



THIS IS NOT THEORY.
THIS IS NOT HYPERBOLE.
THIS IS NOT A FAR-FETCHED, CONSERVATIVE WISHLIST.
**THIS IS HAPPENING HERE, NOW,
ACROSS THE COUNTRY.**

Texas State Representative **Gene Wu** reminded the community of the necessity for vigilance, solidarity, and action in the face of rising anti-Asian sentiments and discriminatory legislation during the APA Justice monthly meeting on October 7, 2024.

Gene serves the constituents of District 137 in the Texas House and is also an attorney in private practice. A dedicated advocate for the Asian Pacific American community in Texas and across the nation, Gene is committed to raising awareness and fostering dialogue about the pressing issues facing Asian Americans today. He regularly hosts town hall meetings and travels nationwide to engage with communities and promote understanding.

Gene began his remarks by expressing profound gratitude to Congresswoman **Grace Meng** for her unwavering leadership in advocating for the Asian American community. He underscored the urgent need for awareness regarding the rising anti-Asian sentiment and legislation that disproportionately impacts Chinese Americans. This acknowledgment of the broader context of discrimination serves as a foundation for his call to action.

Highlighting his recent travels to states like Tennessee and Florida, Gene shared his experiences engaging with Asian American communities and raising awareness about these critical issues. In Tennessee, for instance, a law was initially enacted that barred all immigrants from purchasing land but was later amended to specifically target Chinese individuals. This shift exemplifies a troubling trend across the United States, where anti-Chinese and anti-Asian measures are increasingly pervasive.

Gene noted that there are currently 24 states with some form of anti-Asian land law legislation, with 13 of these states imposing restrictions explicitly against Chinese individuals. He traced this alarming trend back to historical patterns of discrimination, recalling how anti-Asian sentiments have roots that extend to the 1850s when waves of Chinese and Japanese immigrants faced similar oppressive laws.

Drawing parallels between past and present discrimination, Gene recounted how laws from the late 19th and early 20th centuries specifically targeted Asian communities. Often justified under the guise of national security, these laws include the infamous Chinese Exclusion Act and other discriminatory measures against Japanese immigrants. He highlighted that such practices were

not only legislated but also deeply embedded in societal attitudes toward Asian Americans. Gene cautioned that many within the community might dismiss these discriminatory practices as benign, believing they only affect specific groups like those from mainland China. He emphasized that this perspective is fundamentally flawed, as it sets a dangerous precedent where discrimination can escalate unchecked.

Reflecting on significant historical moments when anti-Asian sentiments were codified into law, Gene recalled restrictions placed on Chinese women in the 1870s aimed at controlling population growth and the anti-alien laws passed in California in the early 1900s. He stressed that many of these laws remained in effect until the mid-20th century, highlighting a long-standing legacy of dehumanization and discrimination against Asian communities in America.

Gene pointed out that the modern narrative of suspicion and fear directed at Chinese Americans is not a new phenomenon but rather a continuation of historical patterns of vilification and scapegoating. He called attention to the inflammatory rhetoric from prominent political figures, including **Donald Trump** and **JD Vance**, who portray Chinese Americans as threats to national security. Such rhetoric perpetuates a cycle of fear and distrust that not only harms Chinese Americans but also has broader implications for all Asian communities. Gene warned that this kind of vilification can lead to severe consequences, drawing parallels to the injustices faced by Japanese Americans during World War II when many were forcibly relocated to internment camps despite being U.S. citizens.

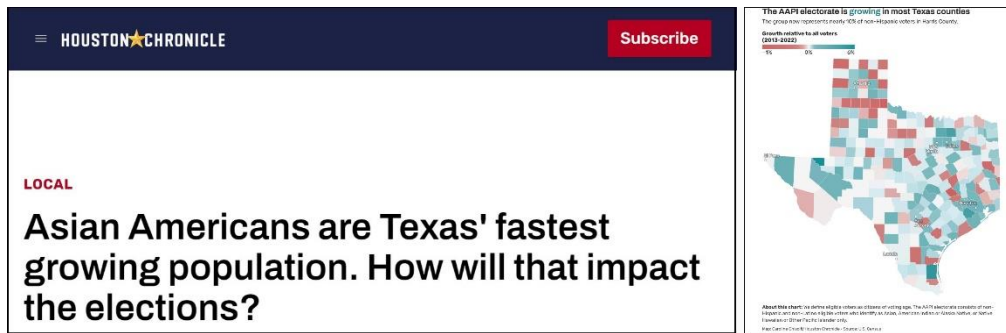
Challenging the notion that only certain Asian groups are targeted by discrimination, Gene asserted that all Asian Americans are perceived as potential threats in a climate of suspicion. He urged the community to acknowledge this shared vulnerability and the necessity for solidarity among Asian Americans of all backgrounds. The historical context of discrimination serves as a crucial reminder that complacency can lead to dire repercussions. Gene called for heightened awareness and activism within the Asian American community, emphasizing that understanding the history of discrimination is vital to effectively combating the resurgence of these harmful ideologies.

Gene also addressed the recent surge in anti-Asian violence that escalated during the COVID-19 pandemic. Gene asserted that the violence and discrimination faced by Asian Americans, irrespective of their specific ethnic backgrounds, underscores the urgency of collectively addressing these pressing issues. He emphasized that current societal attitudes toward Asian Americans are not isolated incidents but rather part of a broader historical narrative of discrimination that demands attention and action.

In conclusion, Gene issued a rallying call for the Asian American community to awaken from complacency and recognize the challenges that lie ahead. He implored individuals to confront the systemic nature of racism and discrimination against Asian Americans, urging them to advocate for themselves and their communities. The resurgence of old hate signals that the struggles faced by Asian Americans in the past are far from over. It is crucial for everyone,

especially the Asian American community, to unite in combating these threats. Gene's message serves as a vital reminder of the necessity for vigilance, solidarity, and action in the face of rising anti-Asian sentiments and discriminatory legislation.

We thank Texas Rep. Wu for his leadership and public service. A video of his talk will be made available soon, along with a summary of the October 7 monthly meeting that is being finalized at this time.



On October 18, 2024, the *Houston Chronicle* highlighted Texas State Representative **Gene Wu** and raised this question, "Asian Americans are Texas' fastest growing population. How will that impact the elections?"

In the upcoming 2024 Texas elections, the rapidly growing Asian American population is becoming an increasingly significant voting bloc. Both Democrats and Republicans are working to engage this diverse community, which has historically been under-represented in political outreach. Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (AAPI) now make up 4% of the Texas electorate, with substantial growth across multiple counties. While this group has leaned Democratic in recent years, there is significant diversity within the community, with variations in political preferences across ethnic groups. Both parties see the potential for the AAPI vote to be decisive in close races, but challenges such as language barriers and underinvestment in outreach persist. As Texas continues to grow and diversify, the AAPI electorate could play a crucial role in shaping the state's political landscape.

Read the *Houston Chronicle* report: <https://bit.ly/3A99Pqv>

The Legacy of Exclusion, Racism, and Xenophobia



The Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 stands as a glaring reminder of our nation’s darker history. As the first federal immigration law aimed at excluding a specific ethnic group based on race and nationality, it arose from a climate of anti-Chinese sentiment during the late 19th century. Chinese immigrants, who primarily sought work in mining and railroad construction, were scapegoated as “parasites,” blamed for taking jobs from white workers and undermining the societal norm of a “Country of White Men.” Other Asian groups, such as Japanese and South Asian immigrants, also faced restrictive measures later on.

The Supreme Court’s landmark decision in the [Chinese Exclusion Case of 1889](#) (Chae Chan Ping v. United States) upheld the federal government’s authority to restrict immigration, validating laws, even in ways that targeted specific racial or national groups. This created a precedent for ongoing anti-Chinese and broader anti-Asian sentiment, which persisted for decades and laid the groundwork for racially exclusionary immigration policies.

Subsequent legislation, such as the Immigration Act of 1924, further codified these racial preferences, establishing quotas that favored immigrants from Northern and Western Europe while severely restricting those from Eastern Europe, Asia, and Africa. The Chinese Exclusion Act was repealed in 1943 during World War II, largely to strengthen ties with China as an ally. However, even then, the Magnuson Act limited immigration of Chinese persons to a mere 105 individuals annually, offering little more than a symbolic gesture toward equality.

The Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965 marked a significant turning point, abolishing the national origins quota system and prioritizing immigrants based on family reunification and skills rather than race or national origin.

In 2011, **Rep. Judy Chu**, Chair of the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus, introduced a resolution expressing regret for the Chinese Exclusion Act. This initiative united various

organizations under the 1882 Project, which included Chinese American Citizens Alliance, Committee of 100, Japanese American Citizens League, the National Council of Chinese Americans, and OCA, serving on the Steering Committee. It led to a remarkable moment in 2021 and 2022 when both the Senate and the House unanimously passed the resolution to acknowledge historical injustices. Read about the 1882 Project: <https://bit.ly/3j7StPa>

The National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER) published a report titled "The Impact of the Chinese Exclusion Act on the Economic Development of the Western U.S." in October 2024. The paper investigates the economic consequences of the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act. The Act reduced the number of Chinese workers of all skill levels residing in the U.S. It also reduced the labor supply and the quality of jobs held by white and U.S.-born workers, the intended beneficiaries of the Act, and reduced manufacturing output. The results suggest that the Chinese Exclusion Act slowed economic growth in western states until at least 1940. Read the NBER report: <https://bit.ly/405zbyj>

According to *Reason* on the NBER report October 7, 2024, one of the main rationales for the passage of the Chinese Exclusion Act was to benefit white workers, who were supposedly victimized by competition from the Chinese. The NBER study shows that it did not achieve that goal. Mass deportations of immigrants destroy more jobs for native-born citizens than they create. The Chinese Exclusion Act benefited "local" white miners competing with Chinese miners. But such effects were outweighed by the much larger number of white workers who benefited from Chinese migration, including the associated job opportunities it created. The economy is not a zero-sum game, and the interests of workers from different ethnic and racial groups are more mutually reinforcing than conflicting. Read the *Reason* report: <https://bit.ly/4f9v7TU>

C100 Updates AAPI Curriculum Research Project

The screenshot shows the Committee of 100 website. The main navigation bar includes 'Report Home', 'News', and 'Contact Us'. Below the navigation, there are links for 'About us', 'Our work', 'Members', 'Partners', 'Events & More', and 'Support Us'. The central content area features a red banner with the text 'Research' and 'K-12 Asian American and Pacific Islander and Ethnic Studies in the United States'. To the right, there is a section titled 'U.S. Map for AAPI Studies Education Requirements' with an 'Overview' tab. This section contains four maps of the United States, each representing a different category of AAPI studies requirements. A legend below the maps explains the categories: Category 1 (Red) for states with no requirements, Category 2 (Orange) for states with requirements for AAPI studies, Category 3 (Yellow) for states with requirements for AAPI studies in specific subjects, Category 4 (Green) for states with requirements for AAPI studies in specific subjects and standards, Category 5 (Blue) for states with requirements for AAPI studies in specific subjects and standards, and Category 6 (Light Blue) for states with no AAPI studies or ethnic studies requirements.

On October 17, 2024, the Committee of 100 (C100) announced an update to its ongoing AAPI Curriculum Research Project, which tracks state legislation and local education standards that require or encourage the teaching of AAPI history in K-12 schools. Launched in 2022, this project is updated annually. New to this year's update is an interactive map that provides

summaries of legislations and education standards related to AAPI or ethnic studies for each state, along with the name and full text of each statute.

“For almost two centuries, the AAPI community has made significant contributions to the U.S., yet Asian Americans are still battling the stereotype of being perpetual foreigners,” said **Cindy Tsai**, Interim President of C100. “Public schools play a crucial role in shaping informed citizens. However, in many states, schools don’t teach students about the contributions of Asian Americans, even though Asian American history is American history. If children aren’t taught this, how can they grow into citizens who understand the experiences and challenges faced by all Americans?”

According to the C100, as of October 3, 2024:

- **12** states have **statutes that require AAPI** studies curriculum
- **4** states are considering **recently introduced bills that would require AAPI** studies curriculum
- **15** states have **academic standards that require AAPI** studies
- **22** states have **statutes that require ethnic** studies curriculum
- **3** states are considering **recently introduced bills that would require ethnic** studies curriculum
- **33** states have **academic standards that require ethnic** studies
- **8** states have **no** statutes, recently introduced bills, or academic standards that require or make optional AAPI studies or ethnic studies curriculum

For more information, visit <https://bit.ly/4fd9EcO>

News and Activities for the Communities

1. APA Justice Community Calendar

The screenshot displays the APA Justice Public Events calendar for October 2024. The calendar is organized by week, with the current week being Monday, October 21. The events listed include:

- Tuesday, October 22:** 2:00pm - Engage with AAAS: 2024 U.S. Elections
- Thursday, October 24:** 1:00pm - Why Do Legislators Brawl? Lawmaking, Fist Fighting and Messaging in Taiwan
- Friday, October 25:** Celebrating the 20th Anniversary of the American Studies Network
- Saturday, October 26:** Celebrating the 20th Anniversary of the American Studies Network; Common Ground and Banquet
- Sunday, October 27:** Celebrating the 20th Anniversary of the American Studies Network
- Sunday, November 3:** 9:00pm - Rep. Gene Wu's Town Hall meeting
- Wednesday, November 6:** 6:00pm - Asian American Women in Media and Music
- Sunday, November 10:** 9:00pm - Rep. Gene Wu's Town Hall meeting
- Tuesday, November 12:** 1:00pm - Threats to International Engagement and Academic Freedom
- Thursday, November 14:** 6:00pm - Fall Address and Networking Event (Financial Services, Investing and Consulting)
- Friday, November 15:** 10:00am - 11:00am - 12:00pm - 1:00pm - 2:00pm - 3:00pm - 4:00pm - 5:00pm - 6:00pm - 7:00pm - 8:00pm - 9:00pm - 10:00pm - 11:00pm - 12:00pm - 1:00pm - 2:00pm - 3:00pm - 4:00pm - 5:00pm - 6:00pm - 7:00pm - 8:00pm - 9:00pm - 10:00pm - 11:00pm - 12:00pm

Upcoming Events:

2024/10/22 Engage with AAAS: 2024 U.S. Elections

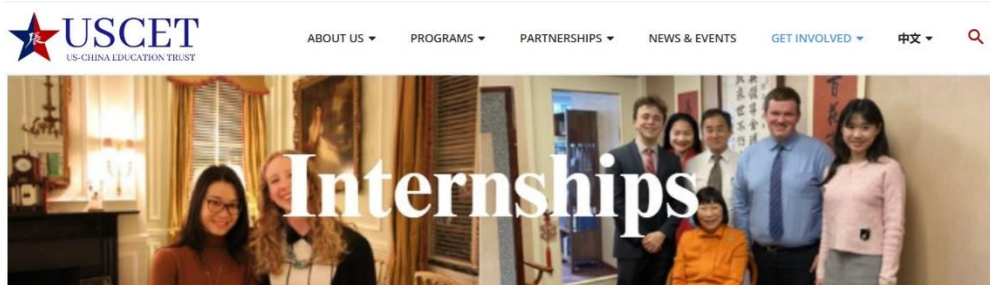
2024/10/24 Why Do Legislators Brawl? Lawmaking, Fist Fighting and Messaging in Taiwan

2024/10/25-27 Celebrating the 20th Anniversary of the American Studies Network
2024/10/26 Common Ground and Banquet
2024/10/27 Rep. Gene Wu's Town Hall Meeting
2024/11/03 Rep. Gene Wu's Town Hall Meeting
2024/11/06 Asian American Women in Media and Music
2024/11/10 Rep. Gene Wu's Town Hall Meeting
2024/11/12 Threats to International Engagement and Academic Freedom
2024/11/14 An Advice and Networking Event (Financial Services, Investing and Consulting)

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

NOTE: Because the regular scheduled day falls on the eve of Election Day, we have moved the next APA Justice monthly meeting to Monday, November 18, 2024. 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.

2. USCET Internships



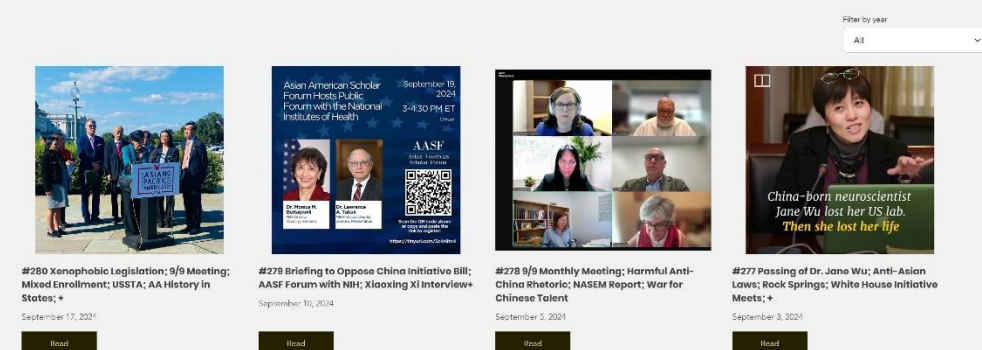
The U.S.-China Education Trust is seeking intern(s) for Spring 2025 to support its communications and programs. Undergraduate juniors, seniors, and graduate students are welcome to apply. The internships offer an opportunity to gain experience in the nonprofit sector and develop expertise in the field of US-China relations. The interns work a hybrid and flexible part-time schedule to accommodate their student schedules. The position includes a stipend or academic credit. Send in your applications by November 8, 2024, 11:59PM ET. For more information, contact <https://bit.ly/3Nz4Tyj>

3. APA Justice Newsletter Web Page Moved to New Website

Newsletters

APA Justice began publishing a free periodic newsletter about 4-7 times a month in July 2020. You can subscribe [here](#). Visit the [Virtual Library](#) to search the entire collection.

Filter by year
All



The screenshot shows a grid of four newsletter items. Each item includes a thumbnail image, a title, a date, and a 'Read' button. The items are: 1) '#280 Xenophobic Legislation; 9/9 Meeting; Mixed Enrollment; USSTA; AA History In States; +' dated September 17, 2021, with a photo of a group of people. 2) '#278 Briefing to Oppose China initiative Bill; AASF Forum with NIH; Xiaoxing Xi interview+ ' dated September 10, 2024, with a blue graphic. 3) '#278 9/9 Monthly Meeting; Harmful Anti-China Rhetoric; NASEM Report; War for Chinese Talent' dated September 5, 2021, with a video call screenshot. 4) '#277 Passing of Dr. Jane Wu; Anti-Asian Laws; Rock Springs; White House Initiative Meets; +' dated September 3, 2021, with a photo of Dr. Jane Wu.

As part of its continuing migration to a new website under construction, we have moved the Newsletter webpage to <https://www.apajusticetaskforce.org/newsletters>. Content of the existing website will remain, but it will no longer be updated. We value your feedback about the new web page. Please send your comments to contact@apajustice.org.

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