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### Racist Video Targets Maryland State Delegate



Maryland state Delegate **Chao Wu**, a Chinese American, was targeted in a racist and xenophobic video released by Republican Delegates **Mark Fisher** and **Brian Chisholm**. The lawmakers accused Delegate Wu of being a Chinese spy, mocked his accent, and employed harmful anti-Asian stereotypes.

In a 13-minute video podcast criticizing an artificial intelligence bill proposed by Delegate Wu, Delegates Fisher and Chisholm questioned his political loyalties based strictly on his birthplace, resorted to harmful tropes, and mocked how he speaks.

The controversy erupted in May 2026, coinciding with Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander Heritage Month.

The incident was widely denounced as xenophobic and deeply offensive. Top state officials, including House Speaker **Joseline Peña-Melnyk**, the Legislative Black Caucus of Maryland, the Maryland Legislative Asian American Caucus, and the Montgomery County Council, publicly condemned the attacks and demanded apologies. Maryland House Minority Leader **Jason**

**Buckel** publicly distanced the House Republican Caucus from the video and defended Delegate Wu.

Watch the WBAL-TV report: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kd7ZXIGo7wA> (2:45).

## Maryland Speaker Condemns Racism and Defends Diversity at APA Justice Meeting



Maryland House Speaker **Joseline Peña-Melnyk** and Maryland State Delegate **Chao Wu** addressed the APA Justice monthly meeting on June 1, 2026, discussing the racist video that targeted Delegate Wu, the response of Maryland House leadership, and the broader importance of diversity, inclusion, and civil rights.

Speaker Peña-Melnyk explained her leadership decision to send a formal letter reprimanding Delegates **Mark Fisher** and **Brian Chisholm**, stating that their conduct was offensive, unacceptable, and beneath the dignity of the Maryland General Assembly. She emphasized that reducing a colleague to harmful stereotypes, questioning his loyalty because of where he was born, and mocking his accent were disrespectful and unbecoming of anyone entrusted with public service. “It echoes a long and painful history of discrimination that has no place in Maryland or in the House of Delegates,” she said

The Speaker reminded Delegates Chisholm and Fisher that the Maryland General Assembly is a body made stronger by the diversity of those who serve here and the communities it represents. “Every member deserves to be treated with respect, and every Marylander deserves to see themselves reflected in a government that values them. We can have disagreements about policy without demeaning one another’s humanity. That is the standard this House must uphold.”

On the issue of immigration, the Speaker reinforced that, “The bottom line is that immigrants matter. We have rights, and we contribute immensely to our state. When immigrants arrive here, we bring with us the richness of our culture, our history, our ideas, our creativity. How could we not benefit as a result? Maryland is one of the most ethnically, racially, and religiously diverse states in the nation. And to me, this is our superpower – the secret sauce behind Maryland’s

success. Here we recognize that these things are strengths, not weaknesses. Our diversity makes us more dynamic and more resilient.”

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Maryland State Delegate **Chao Wu** ([www.chaowu.org](http://www.chaowu.org)) thanked the organizers for the invitation and expressed particular appreciation for the strong support he received from Maryland House leadership, especially Speaker Joseline A. Pena-Melnyk, following the release of a racist video targeting him.

Delegate Wu said that when he first learned about the video, he felt angry, saddened, and disappointed, especially because the individuals involved serve on the same legislative committee as he does. However, those feelings were balanced by a sense of encouragement and empowerment from the broad coalition of support he received from legislative leaders, the AAPI Caucus, the Latino Caucus, the Black Caucus, the Jewish community, and many other organizations and individuals.

He emphasized that the incident was larger than a personal attack on himself. In his view, it reflected broader challenges facing a diverse state like Maryland, where immigrants and people of many backgrounds contribute to society, but they are not recognized and respected. Delegate Wu noted that he had never viewed his accent as a problem and said that when people have difficulty understanding him, he simply repeats himself or speaks more slowly.

Addressing criticism of legislation he sponsored related to artificial intelligence, Delegate Wu defended the bill as a reasonable transparency measure requiring developers of large language models to disclose information about their training data. He noted that similar legislations are being debated in other states, and that respected organizations had also supported the proposal.

## Invited Leaders Comment on Maryland Incident



During the APA Justice monthly meeting on June 1, 2026, Maryland State Delegate **Lily Qi**, who also chairs the Maryland Legislative Asian American & Pacific Islander Caucus, praised the swift and forceful response to the racist video targeting Maryland legislators, crediting much of its impact to the leadership of Speaker **Joseline A. Pena-Melnyk**.

She highlighted the Speaker's immediate and unequivocal condemnation, along with coordinated statements from the Maryland Asian Pacific American Caucus and other organizations, which helped frame the incident as unacceptable and worthy of broad public attention.

Delegate Qi observed that the incident occurred during Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month, underscoring a longstanding challenge faced by Asian Americans: persistent questions about their loyalty, belonging, and identity as Americans. She argued that despite the nation's history and progress, Asian Americans continue to confront stereotypes that cast them as outsiders or suspect citizens.

She emphasized the importance of representation in leadership, noting that Speaker Pena-Melnyk's experience as an immigrant enabled her to articulate why immigrant backgrounds are assets rather than liabilities in public service. Delegate Qi also commended Asian American organizations nationwide for mobilizing quickly and visibly, demonstrating both political strength and a willingness to defend their place in American society.

A major theme of her remarks was solidarity across communities. Delegate Qi pointed to support from the Black, Latino, Women's, Jewish, Muslim, LGBTQ+, and other caucuses in Maryland, arguing that such alliances are essential. She stressed that Asian Americans should likewise stand with other groups when they face discrimination or attacks, because protecting civil rights requires collective action.

Delegate Qi characterized the attacks as part of a broader pattern of divisive politics that seeks to exploit fears about diversity and immigration. She argued that such rhetoric attempts to deny the humanity and legitimacy of fellow Americans based on their backgrounds.

She also connected the controversy to earlier legislative efforts by the same delegates involved in the video. Delegate Qi recalled that they had previously introduced proposals similar to the "alien land laws" enacted in some states, which would have restricted land ownership by Chinese nationals. She described those measures as a modern-day version of exclusionary policies that single out people based on national origin and warned that such approaches create a dangerous precedent that could eventually be applied to other groups.

Delegate Qi concluded by urging continued vigilance in defending the rights of all Americans, emphasizing that opposition to discrimination and exclusion requires sustained advocacy, coalition-building, and community leadership.

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**Cindy Tsai**, Executive Vice President and General Counsel for the Committee of 100, thanked the organizers and the Maryland leaders who brought attention to the racist video, particularly

Speaker **Joseline A. Pena-Melnyk**, Delegate **Chao Wu**, and Delegate **Lily Qi**, for elevating the issue to the national level and engaging the community in discussion.

Drawing on her work with the Committee of 100, Cindy Tsai emphasized the importance of distinguishing between legitimate concerns about the actions of a foreign government and unfairly attributing those actions to an entire ethnic community. She noted that advocacy efforts in recent years have helped encourage more careful and responsible public discourse on these issues.

After watching the video, Cindy Tsai said she was troubled by its content and rejected the notion that disclaimers such as “not all Chinese people are bad” can excuse or negate language that attacks individuals based on their accent, background, or ethnicity. In her view, condemning stereotypes while simultaneously engaging in discriminatory rhetoric does not make such speech acceptable.

Cindy Tsai indicated that society must do better in engaging in responsible and respectful public discourse, particularly when discussing issues involving ethnicity, nationality, and political concerns.

She praised the broad coalition of organizations and communities that responded to the incident, highlighting the importance of solidarity across different groups. She credited Speaker Pena-Melnyk’s public statement with helping mobilize support and described the response as a moment in which the Asian American and Pacific Islander community stood together to affirm that Asian Americans belong in the United States and deserve equal respect.

Cindy Tsai concluded by expressing pride in the community’s response and urging continued visibility, advocacy, and coalition-building to confront discrimination and defend the rights and inclusion of Asian Americans.

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**Haipei Shue**, President of United Chinese Americans, began by thanking Speaker **Joseline A. Pena-Melnyk** for her immediate and unequivocal condemnation of the racist incident. He emphasized that strong leadership makes a significant difference in how communities respond to discrimination and exclusion.

Drawing on his experience working with legislatures across multiple states, Haipei Shue contrasted Maryland’s political environment with that of many states where immigrant and Asian American communities have far less representation and support. He noted that Maryland benefits from both diverse leadership and the presence of Asian American elected officials in the legislature, which helps ensure that community concerns are heard and addressed.

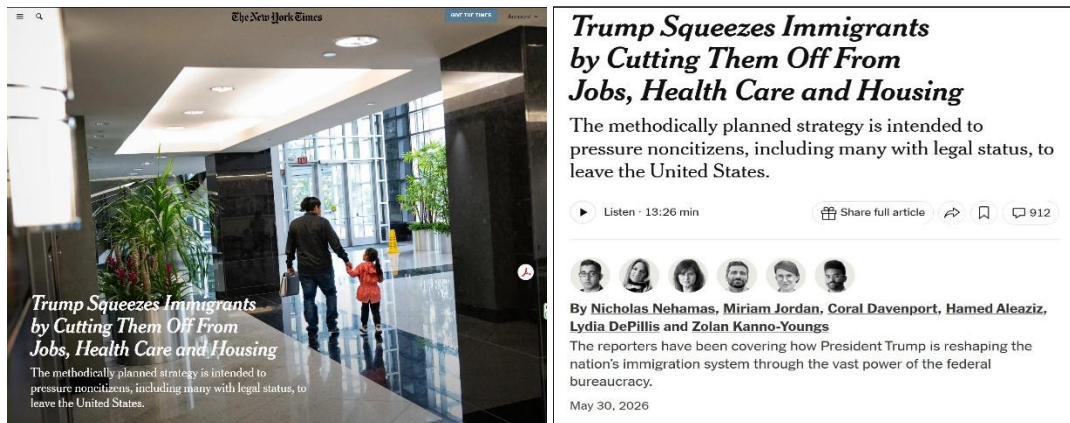
Haipei Shue observed that in states lacking such leadership and representation, harmful policies can advance more easily and sometimes become law. In some cases, he said,

advocates struggle to find policymakers willing to engage with concerns about constitutionality, civil rights, or the impact of legislation on immigrant communities. He recalled instances where objections based on constitutional concerns were dismissed, leaving litigation as the only recourse.

Against that backdrop, Haipei Shue described Maryland as providing a sense of reassurance and protection for immigrant communities. He credited the state's leaders for creating an environment in which concerns can be raised, discussed, and addressed through the democratic process rather than ignored.

He concluded by expressing gratitude to Maryland's elected leaders and emphasizing that their support, responsiveness, and commitment to diversity provide an important safeguard for immigrant and Asian American communities.

## **NYT: Trump Squeezes Immigrants by Cutting Them Off From Jobs, Health Care and Housing**



The image shows a screenshot of a New York Times article. On the left is a photograph of a man and a child walking in a modern, brightly lit hallway. The article title is "Trump Squeezes Immigrants by Cutting Them Off From Jobs, Health Care and Housing". The sub-headline reads: "The methodically planned strategy is intended to pressure noncitizens, including many with legal status, to leave the United States." Below the sub-headline are social media sharing options: "Listen · 13:26 min", "Share full article", and "912" comments. The byline lists the authors: "By Nicholas Nehamas, Miriam Jordan, Coral Davenport, Hamed Aleaziz, Lydia DePillis and Zolan Kanno-Youngs". A short paragraph follows: "The reporters have been covering how President Trump is reshaping the nation's immigration system through the vast power of the federal bureaucracy." The date "May 30, 2026" is at the bottom.

On May 30, 2026, *The New York Times* reported a sweeping, methodically planned White House strategy to make the United States economically and socially inhospitable to immigrants — both undocumented and many with legal status — pressuring them to leave voluntarily rather than depending solely on high-profile deportation raids. The effort is overseen by **Stephen Miller**, one of the president's most influential advisers, who has directed federal agencies across the government to use every regulatory tool at their disposal to cut immigrants off from jobs, healthcare, housing, financial services, and family benefits.

On employment, the Trump administration has revoked airport security clearances for workers holding Temporary Protected Status — a legal humanitarian designation — abruptly ending the jobs of people like **Raquel Molina**, a Salvadoran immigrant who had cleaned planes at Boston's

Logan Airport for nearly three decades. The administration has also proposed barring asylum seekers from receiving work permits, a change that could affect more than two million people who currently hold or have renewed those permits. In addition, many immigrants have been banned from obtaining commercial driver's licenses, cutting them off from careers in trucking and freight.

On financial services, Trump signed an executive order urging banks to scrutinize customers' immigration status. Federal agents also launched an investigation — called Operation Pickpocket — into alleged financial fraud by immigrants. The probe ultimately found that most immigrants had opened bank accounts lawfully using valid identification, yet the broader pressure campaign has had a chilling effect, discouraging immigrants from engaging with financial institutions at all.

On healthcare, the administration moved to require immigration documentation at the roughly 1,600 federally funded community health clinics that have historically served undocumented patients. Though courts paused that requirement after a multistate lawsuit, fear alone caused patient numbers to drop sharply. In Santa Barbara, California, county officials briefly stopped treating thousands of undocumented patients out of concern that the federal government would retaliate by clawing back unrelated grants. Nurses described clinics becoming "ghost towns."

On housing, the Department of Housing and Urban Development announced plans to bar mixed-status families — those with both documented and undocumented members — from public housing. Under prior rules, only one household member needed to hold legal status. The new policy could displace an estimated 20,000 families, many of which include U.S.-citizen children.

On family and child benefits, the administration's tax legislation blocked the federal child tax credit from applying to U.S.-citizen children whose parents are undocumented, significantly cutting refunds for millions of mixed-status families. Officials are also planning to add a five-year waiting period for child care subsidies for legal immigrant children, effectively ensuring most age out of eligibility before they can receive help, and to end undocumented families' access to Head Start preschool programs.

The administration frames all of these measures as protecting American citizens and taxpayers. Independent research, however, suggests immigrants use public benefits at lower rates than native-born Americans and fill critical labor needs. So far, more than 116,000 people without permanent legal status have voluntarily left the country, with many more believed to have departed without notifying the government. Former Homeland Security official **Daniel Delgado**, who served under both parties, called the strategy "immensely effective" — a whole-of-government effort touching virtually every dimension of immigrant life in America.

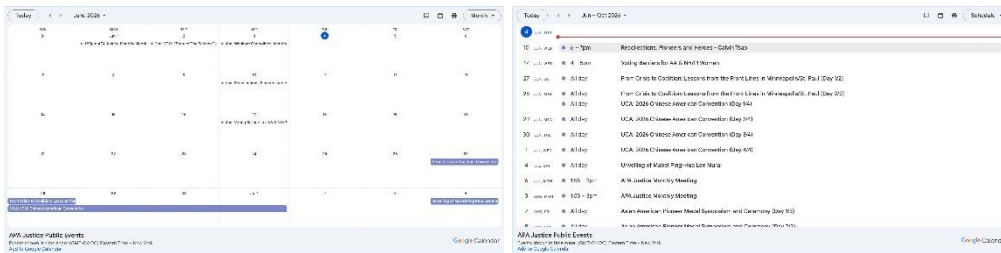
Read *the New York Times* report: <https://www.nytimes.com/2026/05/30/us/politics/trump-immigrants-health-housing.html>.

On May 22, 2026, Rep. **Grace Meng** (NY-06), Chair of the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus (CAPAC), issued a statement condemning the Trump administration's new memo that will force immigrants seeking permanent residency, or a green card, to return to their home countries to apply—a drastic change from longstanding policy.

Read Chair Meng's statement: <https://bit.ly/43Ei60F>. Read the policy change memo: <https://bit.ly/4uJPAXy>

## News and Activities for the Communities

### 1. APA Justice Community Calendar



#### Upcoming Events:

- 2026/06/10 Recollections, Pioneers and Heroes - Calvin Tsao
- 2026/06/17 Voting Barriers for AA & NH/PI Women
- 2026/06/27-28 From Crisis to Coalition: Lessons from the Front Lines in Minneapolis/St. Paul
- 2026/06/28-07/01 UCA: 2026 Chinese American Convention
- 2026/07/04 Unveiling of Mabel Ping-Hua Lee Mural
- 2026/07/06 APA Justice Monthly Meeting

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

### 2. APAICS: Voting Barriers for AA & NH/PI Women

**WHAT:** APAICS' Women's Collective Office Hour: Voting Barriers for AA & NH/PI Women

**WHEN:** June 17, 2026, 4:00-5:00 pm ET

**WHERE:** Webinar

**HOST:** Asian Pacific American Institute for Congressional Studies

**Moderator:** Annie Nguyen, APAICS

**Speakers:**

- **Jessica Jones Capparell**, League of Women Voters
- **Christine Chen**, APIAVote

- **Fajer Saeed Ebrahim**, National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum (NAPAWF)

**DESCRIPTION:** Join the conversation and hear the panelists highlight resources and discuss voting barriers—from voter outreach and language access, to the impacts of legislation such as the SAVE America Act. As elections across the country ramp up, conversations like these matter more than ever.

**REGISTRATION:** <https://apaics.fillout.com/t/uyPvkMvMEBus>

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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 APA Justice website at [www.apajusticetaskforce.org](http://www.apajusticetaskforce.org). We value your feedback. Please send your comments to [contact@apajustice.org](mailto:contact@apajustice.org).

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