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2026/01/05 Monthly Meeting

The next APA Justice monthly meeting will be held on Monday, January 5, 2026, starting at 1:55 pm ET.

Rep. **Grace Meng 孟昭文**, Chair of the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus, is invited to deliver a new year message and a review of 2025.

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:

- Attorneys from Bloch & White LLP on [Baimadajie Angwang 昂旺](#) (invited)
- Attorneys from Despres, Schwartz, & Geoghegan, Ltd. on [Jane Ying Wu 吴瑛](#) (invited)
- **Paul Cheng 鄭文耀**, President, Committee of 100
- **Hua Wang 王华**, Chair; **Haipai Shue 薛海培**, President, United Chinese Americans
- **Sharon Wong**, National Chair; **Thu Nguyen**, Executive Director, OCA National Center

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

The Year That Changed Research



According to [Inside Higher Ed](#) on December 19, 2025, a year of mass federal grant terminations and sweeping policy changes to the nation's research enterprise broke many scientists' trust in the government. And those changes offer insight into what may come next year.

For federally funded researchers, 2025 was widely described as chaotic, destabilizing, and demoralizing. Early in President Trump's second term, federal agencies including the National Institutes of Health (NIH), National Science Foundation (NSF), Department of Education, and

Department of Energy (DOE) froze or terminated hundreds of research grants, disrupting projects across biomedical science, climate research, education, democracy studies, and public health. Many terminations explicitly targeted work involving diversity, equity, gender, or marginalized communities, framing such research as incompatible with agency priorities. Lawsuits warned that these actions would delay scientific advancement, compromise health outcomes, and drive talent away from U.S. research. By some estimates, more than \$17 billion in NIH funding alone was disrupted, and thousands of federal agency staff layoffs left researchers with little guidance amid shifting rules.

Beyond grant terminations, the administration proposed sweeping policy changes that further eroded trust: attempts to cap indirect cost reimbursements, freezes on funding to elite universities over unrelated political disputes, and executive orders giving political appointees greater control over grant awards and cancellations. Although courts blocked some measures and forced partial restoration of grants, the damage was already done. Universities froze hiring and admissions in anticipation of cuts, trainees lost support, and many researchers began questioning whether long-term academic careers in the U.S. were viable. Even when grants were reinstated, they often returned with reduced funding, delays, or new ideological restrictions, reinforcing the sense that science was no longer insulated from politics.

Litigation and advocacy produced some important pushback. Courts halted indirect cost caps, agencies restored thousands of grants, and Congress signaled resistance to the most drastic proposed cuts—suggesting modest increases for NIH rather than the steep reductions sought by the administration. Yet uncertainty remains high heading into 2026. Agencies are scaling back peer review due to staffing shortages, experimenting with automated screening tools, and using text analysis to flag proposals for terms like “health equity” or “structural racism.” Researchers across fields report lasting psychological and professional impacts, including self-censorship, reluctance to pursue ambitious projects, and concerns about the future of evidence-based policymaking.

Despite these challenges, the research community also demonstrated resilience and collective action. Scientists, universities, professional associations, and advocates mobilized through lawsuits, public letters, and sustained engagement with Congress. Many emphasized that openness, fairness, and global collaboration—not isolation—are the foundations of U.S. scientific leadership. While 2026 is expected to remain difficult, the partial successes of 2025 show that coordinated advocacy can still defend the integrity of American research.

In this context, the Asian American Scholar Forum (AASF) [underscored](#) an important victory: the proposed SAFE Research Act was removed from the FY2026 National Defense Authorization Act. AASF’s advocacy helped prevent a measure that would have chilled collaboration, unfairly targeted researchers, and weakened America’s global competitiveness in science—demonstrating that principled, collective action can still make a decisive difference.

CAPAC: 2025 End-of-Year Report



On December 18, 2025, the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus (CAPAC) released its 2025 End-of-Year Report that includes a summary of actions CAPAC has taken to support thriving families and communities, advance equity and defend our rights, and promote economic opportunities for Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders (AANHPIs).

“This has been a challenging year for so many across our country. But our community has proven that we are most powerful when we stand together—to defend our rights, hold the administration accountable, and ensure our voices are heard at every level of government,” said Rep. **Grace Meng** 孟昭文, Chair of the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus. “This report showcases some of CAPAC’s work to protect our community from harmful policies and to create a world where the next generation of Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders is more successful than the last. There’s more work ahead of us, but CAPAC will not stop until we deliver on the promise of the American Dream for the millions who call this great nation home.”

In 2025, CAPAC grew its total membership to 83 Members of the U.S. House of Representatives and Senate —the largest in history. CAPAC also released its policy framework for the 119th Congress to ensure the caucus is laser-focused on meeting our communities’ most pressing needs and launched the Spill the Tea with Chair Meng video series to discuss important topics impacting AANHPIs.

The Caucus also took legislative action to uphold birthright citizenship, defend language access, stand up for immigrants, protect access to affordable health care, oppose the Republicans’ “China Initiative,” and more.

Read the CAPAC press release: <https://bit.ly/4qdx32Z>

Bill to Reunite and Protect Immigrant Families Reintroduced

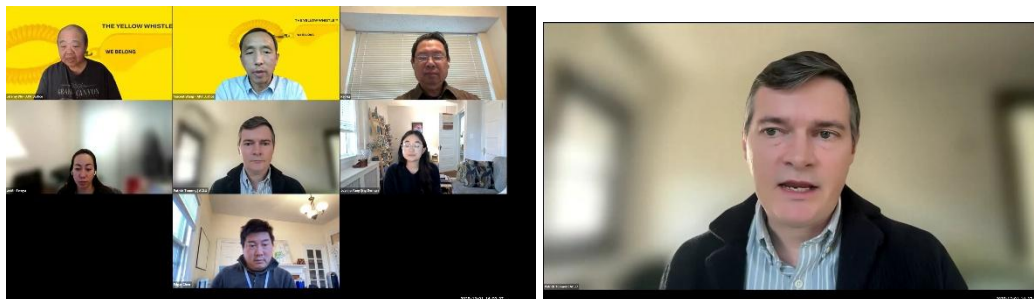


Rep. **Judy Chu** 趙美心 and Senator **Mazie Hirono** reintroduced the [Reuniting Families Act of 2025](#) to address severe backlogs and outdated rules in the U.S. family-based immigration system, which currently leaves nearly four million people with approved visa applications waiting—often for more than a decade—to reunite with loved ones. The bill seeks to modernize a system that has not seen meaningful reform in over 30 years by recapturing unused visas, rolling them into future years, expanding the definition of family to include permanent partners, increasing the total number of family preference visas, raising per-country limits, and establishing a firm cap so no approved applicant waits more than 10 years for a visa.

Lawmakers and a broad coalition of civil rights, immigrant advocacy, faith-based, and community organizations argue the legislation would make immigration more humane, efficient, and fair while strengthening families and communities across the country. Supporters emphasize that family unity is a cornerstone of U.S. immigration policy and that prolonged separations harm not only immigrant families—including Asian American, Southeast Asian, African, and LGBTQ+ communities—but also the nation’s social and economic fabric. The bill has garnered endorsements from dozens of national and local organizations, reflecting broad support for restoring compassion and functionality to the family-based immigration system.

Read the [press release](#) from Rep. Judy Chu’s office.

Update from American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU)



During the APA Justice monthly meeting on December 1, 2025, [Patrick Toomey](#), Deputy Director, National Security Project, American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) returned to provide an in-depth briefing on two major areas of ongoing ACLU litigation: the challenge to Florida’s discriminatory housing law (SB 264) in *Shen v. Simpson*, and the national-security–related litigation surrounding the federal government’s use of the Alien Enemies Act.

Both issues, he noted, remain of high importance to Asian American communities and immigrant-rights advocates across the country.

Patrick began by reminding the audience that the ACLU is engaged in a wide range of immigration and civil rights litigation, including work related to birthright citizenship, which had been referenced earlier in the meeting. For purposes of this briefing, however, he focused on the two cases in which he is personally involved.

I. *Shen v. Simpson* – Florida’s SB 264 Housing Restrictions

Patrick first summarized developments in *Shen v. Simpson*, a challenge to Florida’s SB 264, a law that restricts property ownership by immigrants from China and six other “countries of concern.” The law prohibits non-citizens and non-green-card-holders from these countries from buying property in large parts of Florida, with only narrow exceptions. The ACLU—together with AALDEF, CALDA, the DeHeng Law Firm, Quinn Emanuel, and the ACLU of Florida—represents four individual Chinese immigrant plaintiffs and a real estate company that serves primarily Chinese clients.

On November 4, 2025, the Eleventh Circuit declined to issue a preliminary injunction blocking enforcement of SB 264, which Patrick described as “disappointing.” However, he highlighted an important clarification in the ruling: the court narrowed the law’s application and found that it does not apply to certain Chinese immigrants who live in Florida and intend to remain there indefinitely. That clarification, he explained, provides meaningful—but limited—relief to affected communities.

He emphasized the broader context. SB 264 echoes a long history of “alien land laws” targeting Asians and other immigrant groups under the guise of national security. The ACLU views the law as part of a nationwide resurgence of discriminatory state-level property restrictions, which mirror policies from the early 20th century.

Looking ahead, Patrick explained that next steps remain uncertain. The Eleventh Circuit must first issue a formal order returning the case to the district court. Once that occurs, the ACLU will submit a status update outlining possible avenues for continuing litigation. He assured the audience that updates will be provided as the case progresses.

II. Alien Enemies Act Litigation

Patrick then turned to the ACLU's ongoing challenges to the federal government's use of the Alien Enemies Act, a Civil War-era statute allowing deportation of nationals from countries with which the U.S. is at war. In March of this year, he explained, the government used the Act to deport roughly 250 Venezuelan nationals. These individuals were transported first to El Salvador and detained in the notorious "Terrorism Confinement Center," before later being transferred to Venezuela. Many had no opportunity to contest their designation or removal.

1. The Fifth Circuit Case (for individuals still in the U.S.)

The ACLU represents Venezuelan nationals who remain in the United States and continue to face potential deportation under the Act. In June, the ACLU argued the case before a three-judge panel of the Fifth Circuit, which issued a 2–1 decision ruling the government's use of the Act unlawful. The government then requested an en banc hearing before the full Fifth Circuit, which was granted. Briefing is underway, and oral argument is scheduled for late January. Because the case raises significant questions about executive power and wartime authorities, Patrick noted that Supreme Court review is likely. Importantly, deportations are currently paused while the litigation proceeds.

2. District Court Litigation in Washington, D.C. (for individuals already deported)

A second challenge focuses on those who were removed in March with no due process. The ACLU is seeking a new preliminary injunction that would allow deported individuals the opportunity to bring habeas and due-process claims that they were unable to pursue before being transported out of the country. Toomey noted that many were deported "under cover of darkness," without notice, hearings, or the ability to consult counsel.

These cases, he stressed, raise profound constitutional questions about due process, wartime authority, and the treatment of immigrant communities. Both remain active and will likely continue into 2026.

Conclusion

Patrick closed by encouraging attendees to stay engaged as litigation moves forward. He invited follow-up questions through the chat or by email and reaffirmed the ACLU's commitment to defending the civil rights and liberties of immigrant communities targeted by discriminatory laws and emergency powers. The outcomes of these cases, he noted, will have significant implications for Asian American communities, Venezuelan migrants, and the broader legal landscape governing immigration enforcement.

December and August Meeting Summaries Posted



December 2025 Meeting Summaires

Dec 1, 2025



November 2025 Meeting Summary

Nov 3, 2025



October 2025 Meeting Summary

Oct 6, 2025



September 2025 Meeting Summary

Sep 8, 2025

Summary for the December 2025 APA Justice monthly meeting has been posted at . We thank these distinguished speakers for sharing their insightful remarks and updates:

- **Judith Teruya**, Executive Director, Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus
- **Joanna YangQing Derman**, Director, Anti-Profilng, Civil Rights & National Security Program, Advancing Justice | AAJC
- **Gisela Perez Kusakawa**, Executive Director, Asian American Scholar Forum (AASF)
- **Kin Yan Hui**, National President, Chinese American Citizens Alliance
- **Patrick Toomey**, Deputy Director, National Security Project, American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU)
- **Edgar Chen**, Special Advisor, National Asian Pacific American Bar Association (NAPABA)

Summary for the August 2025 APA Justice monthly meeting has been posted at <https://bit.ly/45gnvw6>. We thank these distinguished speakers for sharing their insightful remarks and updates:

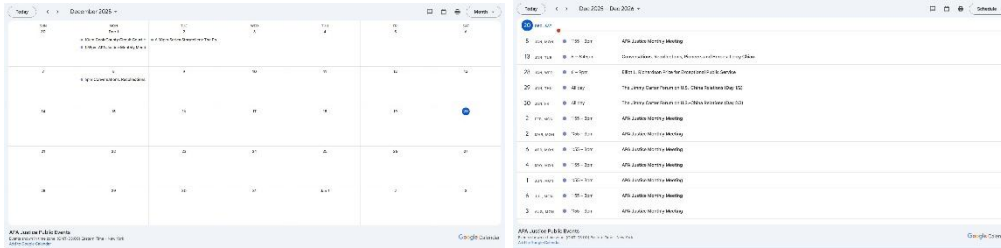
- **Judith Teruya**, Executive Director, Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus
- **Joanna YangQing Derman**, Director, Anti-Profilng, Civil Rights & National Security Program, Advancing Justice | AAJC
- **Munira Abdullahi**, Member, Ohio House of Representatives
- **Guangya Liu**, Member, North Carolina House of Representatives
- **Min Fan**, Executive Director, U.S. Heartland China Association

We apologize for the lateness in posting this summary.

Past monthly meeting summaries are posted at: <https://www.apajusticetaskforce.org/librarynewsletters-summaries>

News and Activities for the Communities

1. APA Justice Community Calendar



Upcoming Events:

2026/01/05 APA Justice Monthly Meeting

2026/01/13 Conversations, Recollections, Pioneers and Heroes: Leroy Chiao

2026/01/29-30 The Jimmy Carter Forum on U.S.-China Relations

2026/02/02 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.