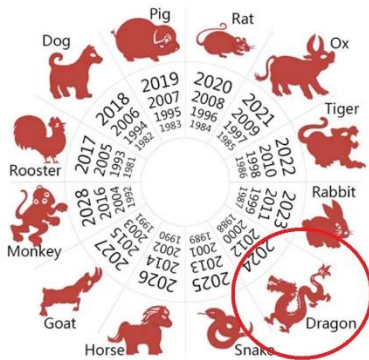


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The Year of The Dragon Has Arrived



February 10 was New Year Day for the Year of the Dragon with celebrations across the U.S. and the world. The sighting of a dragon was reportedly captured in a video in Singapore, but locals later claimed with tongue in cheek that the dragon is around all year and stays at a hotel named after it.

When did the Chinese calendar start? According to [Wikipedia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chinese_calendar), it depends on when the origin of a particular calendar era is chosen. This is Year 4722 if you go by the first reign of the Yellow Emperor (**Huángdì** 黄帝).

Updates on Alien Land Laws in FL, GA, and More



On February 1, 2024, The 11th Circuit Court of Appeals temporarily halted the enforcement of Florida's alien land law, known as SB 264, against two Chinese immigrants who have challenged the statute in court.

On very short notice, **Clay Zhu** (DeHeng Law Offices), **Ashley Gorski** (ACLU), and **Patrick Toomey** (ACLU) of the legal team spoke at the APA Justice monthly meeting on February 5, 2024. They provided updates on the ruling for the ongoing lawsuit which was filed after Florida passed SB 264 last May.

The legal team, including the ACLU, ACLU of Florida, DeHeng Law Offices PC, AALDEF, and Quinn Emanuel, swiftly challenged the Florida state law in May. Despite the District Court judge initially rejecting their motion for a preliminary injunction, the legal team appealed to the Court of Appeals last August, seeking an expedited process due to the harm caused by the state law.

The legal team is grateful for the decision that was issued. It prevents Florida from enforcing SB 264 against two of the plaintiffs. It is a very good sign because the court's reasoning was that the plaintiffs are substantially likely to prevail on their argument that Florida's law is preempted by federal law.

There is already a federal statute that regulates real estate purchases that potentially implicate national security, the court said. Under the Constitution, the federal law controls and for that reason the Florida law is very likely unconstitutional. The Department of Justice filed a statement of interest in support of the preliminary injunction in the US District Court in June 2023.

The adopted legal theory, if it is embraced ultimately by the Appeals Court, is one that could reach many other people who are contending with the hardships posed by SB 264.

Oral arguments are scheduled in Miami the week of April 15. [Florida Asian American Justice Alliance \(FAAJA\)](#) has been leading a broad, diverse coalition to hold rallies against SB264. Concerned organizations have also submitted amicus briefs.

The legal team's talk is included in this partial summary of the February 5 APA Justice monthly meeting: <https://bit.ly/3uuhm0b>. For more information about alien land bills, visit <https://bit.ly/43epBcl>

Georgia Introduces Alien Land Bill HB 1093



GA HB1093 | 2023-2024 | Regular Session

Georgia House Bill 1093
GA State Legislature page for HB1093

Summary | Sponsors | Texts | Votes | Research | Comments | Track

Status

Spectrum: Partisan Bill (Republican 6-0)
Status: Introduced on January 30 2024 - 25% progression
Action: 2024-02-01 - House Second Readers
Pending: House Agriculture and Consumer Affairs Committee
Text: Latest bill text (Introduced) [PDF]

ACLU of Georgia Testimony on HB 1093

According to LegiScan, [House Bill \(HB\) 1093](#), was introduced by six Republicans in the Georgia legislature on January 31, 2024.

A hearing was held by the Georgia House Agriculture and Consumer Affairs Committee on February 9, 2024. **Ben Lynde**, ACLU of Georgia Policy Counsel, testified on HB 1093, a bill that would exclude certain non-citizens from buying agricultural land in Georgia.

He said, "HB 1093 represents a new law that recalls similar efforts over the past to weaponize false claims of National Security against Asian immigrants and other marginalized communities. It is very difficult for me now as a veteran and lover of History to recall the horrors I felt in high school when I learned about bills like the Chinese Exclusion laws and alien land acts to see my state government trying to do similar laws... In the early 1900s, politicians from across this country used similar justifications to pass alien land laws and prohibit Chinese and Japanese immigrants from becoming land owners. These racist policies not only hurt immigrant families financially at that time but also severely exasperated violence, discrimination against Asian communities living in the United States... Regardless of the concerns which I do understand about where we got to the bill today, I don't want to have a discriminatory practice of the past being codified in Georgia law... Property ownership by certain noncitizens as a threat to National Security is a baseless claim with no evidence that they are causing harm... Members of the Asian communities are experiencing historic highs in discrimination and hate crimes in the modern discourse now... The Florida law has been enjoined by the 11th Circuit Court that will also hear this law if it is passed by Georgia... We just hope that you will reject this bill today or when this bill comes up for a vote. Thank you very much for your time."

Time was not adequate for all who wished to speak at the hearing. Those who spoke in opposition to the bill included Koreans, Vietnamese, Latinos, and whites. The bill was not advanced to the next step of the process, pending on further discussion and negotiation.

Watch a video of Ben Lynde's testimony at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ya9zGuzHOMq> (2:57).

The Committee of 100 tracks federal and state alien land bills and maintains an interactive map at: <https://bit.ly/3Hxta4B>

USDA Status Report on Foreign Investments in US Land



Micah R. Brown, Staff Attorney of the National Agricultural Law Center at the US Department of Agriculture, gave a presentation on the history and current developments in anti-foreign land ownership laws to the SB 147 Roundtable.

The presentation covers:

- Historical context on how state laws vary widely without a generalized or uniform approach and how they developed unevenly at five different “political flashpoints” over ensuing decades/centuries including the period of 2021 to the present,
- Current proposals in Congress to seek to control, prohibit, restrict, or increase oversight on foreign investments in U.S. agriculture,
- Enactment of alien land law SB 383 in Arkansas; preliminary injunction against SB 264 in Florida, and Missouri Governor **John Ashcroft**’s Executive Order 24-01

Read the presentation: <https://bit.ly/49ve4IX>

CAPAC Denounces Efforts to Ban Chinese Immigrants from Owning Land in the U.S.



On February 8, 2024, the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus (CAPAC) held a virtual press conference about the recent resurgence of land laws that would prohibit Chinese immigrants from purchasing or owning property in the United States, following a federal appeals court's temporary injunction. In the ruling, a federal judge noted that it violates the 14th amendment's protection against discrimination.

CAPAC members denounced the Republican-led attempts to restrict land ownership that are being pushed in Congress and in state legislatures across the nation, and they will uplift [legislation](#) aimed at stopping these efforts from moving forward. CAPAC has cautioned against history repeating itself through laws that ban land or property ownership based on an individual's country of origin.

For more information, contact [Graeme Crews](#), (202) 597-2923 (Rep. Judy Chu) or [Jordan Goldes](#), (202) 308-9691 (Rep. Grace Meng)

New Warrantless Surveillance Bill Introduced in Congress

THE HILL

NATIONAL SECURITY

House unveils new warrantless surveillance bill

BY REBECCA BEITSCH - 02/12/24 6:06 PM ET



According to *The Hill* on February 12, House Republicans unveiled a new package for reauthorizing and reforming the nation's warrantless surveillance powers. Section 702 of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA), which allows the government to spy on noncitizens located abroad, is set to expire in April after a short-term extension.

Monday's text more closely aligns with the original proposal from the House Intelligence Committee over that of its Judiciary competitor, focusing on more reforms at the FBI to address misuse of the powerful spy tool. It does not include Judiciary's hope for a warrant requirement — something deemed a red line for the intelligence community but nonetheless a top priority for privacy advocates in Congress.

Though FISA 702 only allows the government to surveil foreigners, their communications with Americans are often swept up in the process, creating a database found to be misused by the FBI, which has already undertaken a number of reforms amid criticism.

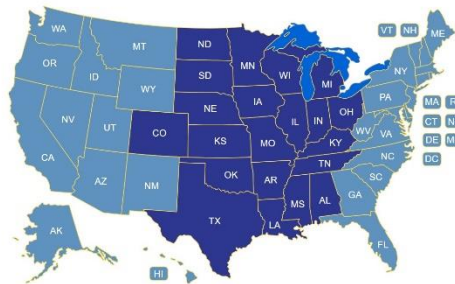
To privacy champions and advocates, a warrant is the only way to protect Americans' rights.

Complicating the bill's consideration further are reports from *Politico* it may be partially considered during a closed session.

"Make no mistake: a secret session is completely unnecessary. National security legislation is openly debated in every Congress. There have only been 6 secret sessions in the House since 1812," **Elizabeth Goitein**, co-director of the liberty and national security program at the Brennan Center for Justice, wrote on X. "Secret law is anathema to democracies, and making law in secret is the next worst thing. Open debate is a core feature of our democratic system. But intelligence committee leaders prefer to work in the shadows because it gives them a strategic advantage."

Read *The Hill* report: <https://bit.ly/3SYnvuU>.

US Heartland China Association



Min Fan 范敏, Executive Director of the US Heartland China Association (USHCA), introduced USHCA and described its mission and activities during the APA Justice monthly meeting on February 5, 2024.

USHCA was started by the late Senator **Adlai Stevenson**, Illinois; it is almost 20 years old originally under the name of Midwest-US China Association. **Bob Holden**, former Governor of Missouri, is current Chair of USHCA. USHCA is a 501(C)3 nonprofit organization. It does not lobby.

USHCA is funded by American sources including membership dues, Heartland community supporters, private donations, grants from private foundations, corporate sponsors, and

contributions from state governmental agencies.

Through organizing people-to-people exchanges in culture, education, and business, USHCA promotes a stable and productive US-China relationship to protect and advance the interests of the American Heartland so that:

- Farmers in the Heartland can continue to expand our exports to China.
- Educational institutions in the Heartland can remain competitive and continue to attract the best talent from around the world, including China,
- Companies headquartered in the Heartland can remain competitive in the global economy by continuing to do business in and sell products to China.
- The Heartland community and leaders have the resources to better understand and engage with China.
- Heartland students can have the opportunities to develop a global mindset through learning about the Chinese language and culture.

There are a lot of bridges to the world. Where bridges exist, communities flourish. USHCA has a bi-partisan network of many former governors, ambassadors, and local officials. USHCA works with them to build community connections. In 2020, in the depth of the pandemic, USHCA was one of the first NGOs that brought people from the US and China together via Zoom to talk about education, public health, and development programs that are in the best interest of the Heartland community.

Min sees some hesitation on both sides. The Chinese side is worried about being locked up in a small black room in the customs office. The US side is worried about being held hostage in China. There is fear and the other side looks strange after no exchanges for three years.

USHCA believes that bringing back exchanges is very important. It received support from the Ford Foundation and the Luce Foundation to promote Yangtze River and Mississippi River city-to-city exchange on energy transition, climate change, and green economy. Six mayors coming from five different states in the Heartland visited Hong Kong, Wuhan, Nanjing, Suzhou and Shanghai.

Min said there are politicians whose mindset is shut. There are also elected officials who are curious and interested in learning.

The communities have a role to play.

Her presentation is available here: <https://bit.ly/3HTc5Cu>. Her talk is included in this partial summary of the February APA Justice monthly meeting: <https://bit.ly/3uuhm0b>

Muscatine, Iowa, Celebrates Lunar New Year



According to [several local reports](#), Muscatine and China celebrate almost four decades of friendship with Lunar New Year Celebration on February 9, 2024.

The events featured performances from Chinese students, videos documenting Muscatine and China's shared history, and speeches from local, national, and international ambassadors.

"There's probably not all positive rapport with China from some leaders. But we just want to get more people here so they can see the people and see the traditions," said **Sarah Lande**, one of the local diplomats on the state of current Chinese-American diplomatic relations.

Terry Branstad, former Iowa Governor and US Ambassador to China, commented in the event, "I think the more people get to know each other... the more they gain friendship and trust in each other and that can be good for both of our countries... We are the two largest economies in the world... if we can find ways to get along and work together... it benefits the whole world."

People's Republic of China President **Xi Jinping** visited Iowa and stayed with Sarah Lande's home in Muscatine back in 1985. He has remained friends with several Iowans since.

News and Activities for the Communities

1. APA Justice Community Calendar



Upcoming Events:

- 2024/02/13-15 Senior Executives Association Senior Executive Leadership Summit
- 2024/02/13 WHI: Advancing Educational Equity for AA and NHPI Students
- 2024/02/13 Committee of 100: The Career Ceiling Challenges in Journalism
- 2024/02/27 President's Advisory Commission on AA and NHPs Meeting and Solicitation for Oral and Written Comments
- 2024/02/28 WHI: Community Engagement Event

Visit <https://bit.ly/45KGyga> for event details.

2. Asian American Identity: At the Intersection of Perpetual Foreigner and Pop Culture Trendsetter



WHAT: Asian American Identity: At the Intersection of Perpetual Foreigner and Pop Culture Trendsetter

WHEN: March 6, 2024, 4:00 pm Pacific Time/7:00 pm Eastern Time (90 minutes)

WHERE: Virtual Workshop

HOST: 1990 Institute

SPEAKERS:

- Neil Ruiz, Head of New Research Initiatives, Pew Research Center
- Ziyao Tian, Research Associate, Pew Research Center
- Jeff Yang, author, journalist, businessman (Rise: A Pop History of Asian America from the Nineties to Now)
- Margaret Yee, education consultant

DESCRIPTION: This virtual Workshop aims to foster dialogue for better understanding of different cultures and contribute to a more inclusive representation of our communities as Americans. While prepared for middle and secondary school educators who teach Asian American Pacific Islander (AAPI) Studies and/or Ethnic Studies in mind, this Workshop is open to all.

REGISTRATION: <https://bit.ly/48IGsw1>

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