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2026/08/03 APA Justice Monthly Meeting

The next APA Justice monthly meeting will be held today, Monday, August 3, 2026, starting at 1:55 pm ET.

Regular updates will be provided by:

- **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 to welcome the following distinguished invited speakers:

- [Tam Dao](#), Associate Vice President of Public Safety and Research Security, Rice University
- [Kenny Evans](#), Fellow in Science, Technology, and Innovation Policy, Rice University
- [Roger Innes](#), Distinguished Professor, Biology, Indiana University

We regret that **Sarah Stalker-Lehoux** (National Science Foundation) will not be able to join us this month. We are pleased to announce that **Rebecca Keiser**, Acting Chief of Staff and Chief of Research Security Strategy and Policy at NSF, will speak at our next monthly meeting on **Tuesday, September 1, 2026**. Note this is earlier than our usual schedule, since the standard meeting date of September 7 falls on Labor Day, a federal holiday.

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.

In Memoriam: Ambassador Nicholas Platt (1936–2026)



APA Justice joins the broader community in mourning the passing of Ambassador **Nicholas Platt**, who died on July 23, 2026, at age 90. A distinguished American diplomat and longtime bridge-builder between the United States and Asia, Platt spent more than five decades shaping the relationship between the two regions — first as a career Foreign Service officer, and later as the transformative fifth president of the Asia Society.

A Diplomatic Career Spanning Asia

Born in New York City on March 10, 1936, to architect Geoffrey Platt and Helen (née Choate) Platt, Nicholas Platt entered the U.S. Foreign Service in 1959. After training in Chinese at the State Department Language School and in Taichung, Taiwan, he began his career in Asia as a China analyst at the U.S. Consulate General in Hong Kong from 1964 to 1968.

Platt's career placed him at the center of some of the most consequential moments in U.S.-Asia relations. As a young diplomat, he accompanied President Richard Nixon on the historic 1972 trip to Beijing that opened U.S.-China relations. Over a 34-year diplomatic career, he went on to serve as U.S. Ambassador to Zambia (1982–1984), the Philippines (1987–1991), and Pakistan (1991–1992), along with senior postings in Canada, China, Hong Kong, and Japan.

Twelve Years Leading the Asia Society

In 1992, Platt became the fifth president of the Asia Society, a role he held for 12 years until 2004. Asia Society's [own tribute](#) describes his tenure as a period of dramatic institutional growth, during which he expanded the organization's programming and public profile substantially.

In 2000, Platt launched a New York program series on Asian social issues that brought attention to underexamined challenges — including women's rights, HIV/AIDS, and environmental issues

— while seeking common ground between Asia and the United States. In the aftermath of September 11, 2001, he mobilized the organization's resources across disciplines to help the public and policymakers understand root causes and responses in the region, positioning Asia Society to meet growing demand for information about Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Even after stepping down as president in 2004 and becoming President Emeritus, Platt remained deeply engaged with the organization — speaking frequently at its programs, attending events, and offering counsel to its leadership for years afterward.

A Lasting Legacy

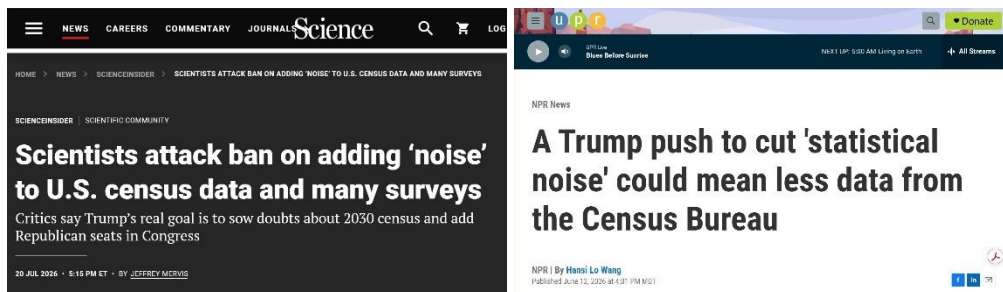
Asia Society Philippines, reflecting on Platt's passing, called him a leader whose "visionary leadership and lifelong commitment to strengthening ties between the United States and Asia left an indelible mark on the organization and on generations of leaders across the region."

Platt is survived by his three sons, **Adam Platt**, the New York Magazine restaurant critic, actor **Oliver Platt**, and **Nicholas Platt Jr.**, an investment banker. His wife, **Sheila Maynard Platt**, passed away in 2018.

APA Justice extends its condolences to Ambassador Platt's family, friends, and colleagues at the Asia Society and across the diplomatic community. His decades of work fostering understanding between the United States and Asia leave a legacy that continues to inform the work of many organizations.

Read the Asia Society tribute to Ambassador Nicholas Platt: <https://bit.ly/4g7xwl7>

Ban "Noise" in Census Data Means Less Data and Undermines a Key Defense Against Re-Identification



A little-noticed June 4, 2026 directive from the Department of Commerce is drawing sharp criticism from statisticians and demographers, who say it strips the Census Bureau and Bureau

of Economic Analysis of the modern privacy tools needed to protect respondents' identities while still releasing usable data — forcing a return to cruder, less accurate methods.

What the Directive Does

The order bans the Census Bureau and BEA from using "noise infusion" — a technique that modifies datasets by adding carefully calibrated random values — across their statistical products, including preparations for the 2030 census. Statistician **Daniel Aaronson** wrote that the directive "bans essentially all modern techniques for preserving privacy in large datasets." In noise infusion's place, the directive requires agencies to rely on two older, blunter techniques: "coarsening" (rounding or aggregating data, such as reporting age in five-year bands instead of single years) and outright suppression of data for small populations.

Economist **Ron Jarmin**, who retired in May after 33 years at Census, including two stints as acting director, said noise infusion "allows us to produce much more granular data on surveys," including on economic activity and jobs — capability the new policy eliminates.

Statistician **Sallie Keller**, who recently returned to the University of Virginia after four years as Census's chief scientist, called the shift "a throwback to the 1970s," warning it will produce "incomplete and inaccurate data." **Beth Jarosz** of Georgetown University's Massive Data Institute said the impact will fall hardest on small communities: "Neighborhood-level data is at risk. Rural communities' data may be not publishable," with counties of only a few hundred residents potentially losing data coverage entirely.

John Abowd, former Census chief scientist under both the first Trump and Biden administrations, said the order will force a complete redesign of 2030 census redistricting data plans — "not just the confidentiality protections." Jarosz also criticized the process itself, noting the directive bypassed the normal expert review and public feedback process: "This new order upends all of that. It takes the public out of the process. It takes the experts out of the process."

Why Noise Infusion Exists in the First Place

Noise infusion is not a bureaucratic technicality — it exists because of a well-documented, real technical threat: re-identification attacks, in which researchers or bad actors cross-reference "anonymized" data against outside information to unmask individuals within a dataset that was never supposed to reveal who they are.

The classic empirical demonstration of this risk dates to 2002, when computer scientist **Latanya Sweeney** showed that 87% of the U.S. population could be uniquely identified using just three pieces of information: ZIP code, birth date, and sex. To prove the point, she targeted a supposedly anonymized database of Massachusetts state employees' medical records — records the state's own governor, **William Weld**, had publicly assured the public were fully de-identified. Sweeney purchased the Cambridge, MA voter rolls for \$20, cross-referenced them against the medical data, and identified Weld's own record: only six voters in Cambridge shared

his birth date, only three of those were male, and only one lived in his ZIP code. She mailed the governor his own medical records to demonstrate the vulnerability.

The core lesson of that research directly parallels the Census debate: the more "distinctive" or granular a piece of information is (an exact age, a specific location, a rare combination of characteristics), the easier it becomes to link supposedly anonymous records back to a real person using outside data sources — exactly the risk that random noise, deliberately injected into statistical releases, is designed to obscure. Coarsening and suppression, the two methods the new Commerce directive leaves in place, address this risk far more bluntly: by hiding or aggregating data rather than mathematically calibrating uncertainty into it, which is why experts like Keller and Jarmin warn they sacrifice far more data usefulness for the same amount of privacy protection.

Why This Matters

The Census Bureau adopted noise-based differential privacy for the 2020 census specifically because advances in computing power and the growing availability of commercial and voter-file data made older anonymization approaches increasingly vulnerable to exactly this kind of attack. Rolling back noise infusion now, critics argue, does not just risk cruder data — it risks reopening privacy vulnerabilities that the field spent years working to close, at precisely the moment when the tools to exploit them (large commercial datasets, computing power, and cross-referencing techniques like those Sweeney demonstrated) have only grown more powerful and accessible.

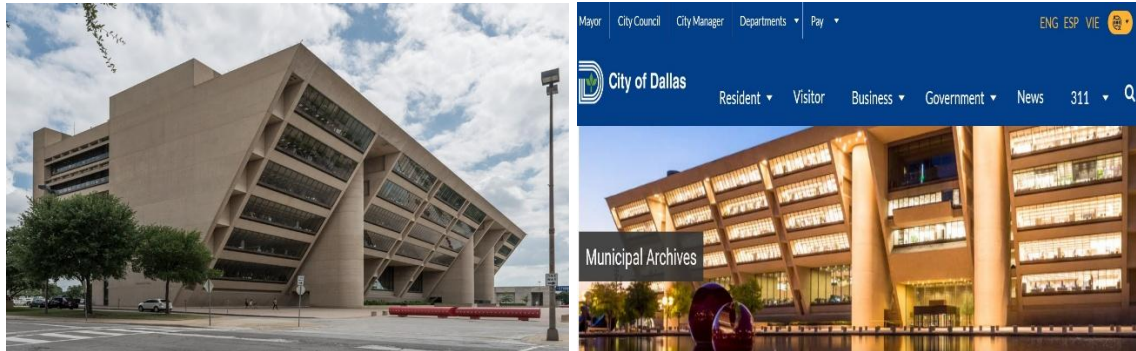
What's Next

It remains to be seen whether the directive will be revised in response to expert criticism, or whether litigation or congressional pushback — similar to what we have covered regarding the OMB grantmaking rule elsewhere in recent issues — will emerge as the Census Bureau begins redesigning its approach ahead of the 2030 count. Census data disaggregation has historically been a significant issue for accurately counting and serving Asian American and Pacific Islander subpopulations.

Links and References

- 2026/07/20 *Science*: [Scientists attack ban on adding 'noise' to U.S. census data and many surveys](#)
- 2026/06/12 *NPR*: [A Trump push to cut 'statistical noise' could mean less data from the Census Bureau](#)
- 2018/12/05 AMIA Annual Symposium Proceedings: [Re-Identification Risk in HIPAA De-Identified Datasets: The MVA Attack](#)

A Monument to Dallas's Healing Faces the Wrecking Ball: I.M. Pei's City Hall



Dallas City Hall — the dramatic inverted-pyramid landmark designed by Committee of 100 founder **I.M. Pei** 貝聿銘 — is now at risk of demolition, as the city weighs its future amid a preservation battle that has drawn national attention and become an early flashpoint in Dallas's 2027 mayoral race.

A Building Born From Tragedy

Then-Mayor J. **Erik Jonsson** commissioned Pei to design Dallas City Hall in the 1960s, hoping a bold new civic building could help the city move past the trauma of President Kennedy's assassination and project confidence in its future. Completed in 1978, the Brutalist landmark became a symbol of renewal for a city reeling from tragedy — and remains the only government building I.M. Pei designed in a career that also produced the Louvre Pyramid, the John F. Kennedy Library, and the Bank of China Tower.

Now Facing an Uncertain Future

Dallas is currently weighing several options for the building's fate: moving city government elsewhere, selling the site, demolishing it outright, or funding repairs that estimates suggest could exceed \$500 million. City staff is expected to present leasing options for council consideration by August 26. The site is also in the process of receiving local landmark designation and is seen by preservationists as a potential centerpiece of a revived civic center alongside City Hall Plaza and the J. Erik Jonsson Central Library. The building has become the focus of a growing preservation campaign. DOCOMOMO US, an organization dedicated to Modern Movement architecture, lists it among the nation's most threatened examples of modern architecture, and the World Monuments Fund included it in its Irreplaceable America program marking the Declaration of Independence's 250th anniversary.

Debate over its fate has drawn large crowds to Dallas City Council meetings, and a legal coalition has formed to examine potential negligence in the building's maintenance.

A Son's Appeal to Save His Father's Legacy

Architect **Li Chung "Sandi" Pei** 贝礼中 — I.M. Pei's son and a Committee of 100 member — has spent months publicly urging the city not to let his father's building go, culminating in an open letter to Dallas officials.

"A city hall is never just an office building," Sandi writes. "It is the physical expression of a city's character — its values, its aspirations, and its belief in democratic life." He argues that the building was created "at one of the most painful moments in the city's history," designed expressly to embody "the authority and openness of representative government" at a time when Dallas needed a symbol of transparency and renewed democratic confidence.

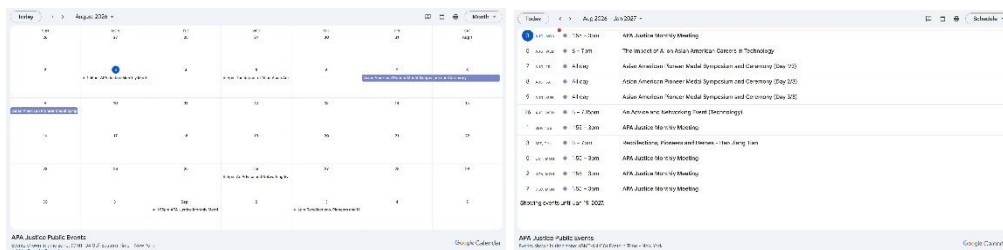
Sandi directly challenges the case for demolition, writing that a proposal to replace City Hall with a commercial entertainment complex would "confuse the market value of land with the immeasurable value of civic identity," and that deferred maintenance "is not a justification for demolition." He points to preservationists — including the Dallas Chapter of the American Institute of Architects and DOCOMOMO US — who have already underscored the building's significance, adding: "Dallas City Hall helped the city heal and move forward. To lose it now would be to forget the very purpose it was built to serve."

Why This Matters

I.M. Pei's work has become a lasting icon of Chinese American excellence in American civic and cultural life, and Dallas City Hall stands as a rare example of that legacy applied directly to the architecture of American democracy itself — the only government building he ever designed. Its potential loss would be more than an architectural one; it would erase a visible marker of Asian American contribution to how American civic institutions are physically expressed and experienced.

News and Activities for the Communities

1. APA Justice Community Calendar



Upcoming Events:

2026/08/03 APA Justice Monthly Meeting

2026/08/05 C100: The Impact of AI on Asian American Careers in Technology

2026/08/07-09 AASF: Asian American Pioneer Medal Symposium and Ceremony

2026/08/26 C100: An Advice and Networking Event (Technology)

2026/09/01 APA Justice Monthly Meeting

2026/09/03 C100: Recollections, Pioneers and Heroes - Hao Jiang Tian

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

2. C100: Recollections, Pioneers and Heroes - Hao Jiang Tian

WHAT: Recollections, Pioneers and Heroes - Hao Jiang Tian

WHEN: September 3, 2026, 6:00-7:00 pm ET

WHERE: Webinar

HOST: Committee of 100

Moderator: **Peter Young**, Chair of the Conversations Initiative and Committee of 100 New York Regional Chair and Board Member

Speaker: **Hao Jiang Tian** 田浩江, World renown opera singer, Founder and Artistic Director of iSing!

DESCRIPTION: The event will feature Hao Jiang Tian, a world renown opera singer and the founder and artistic director of iSing!, which for 15 years has trained Western and Chinese singers for careers in opera. He is also a Committee of 100 member.

Hao Jiang Tian, internationally renowned bass, has sung more than 1,400 performances of 50 operatic roles worldwide. The only Chinese singer to have appeared at the Metropolitan Opera for 20 seasons in 26 different operas, Tian has been highly acclaimed for his performances in leading bass roles at major opera houses around the world.

Tian is also the founder and Artistic Director of the iSING! International Young Artists Festival. Celebrating its 15th anniversary, iSING!'s mission is to train Western singers to perform in Chinese while nurturing outstanding young Chinese singers for careers on the world's leading opera stages.

REGISTRATION: <https://c100-9-3-2026.eventbrite.com>

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

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