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03/24 Webinar: Mass Surveillance and the ICE Crackdown: What the AAPI Community Needs to Know

WHAT: Mass Surveillance and the ICE Crackdown: What the AAPI Community Needs to Know

WHEN: March 24, 2026, 7:00 pm ET

WHERE: Webinar

CO-HOSTS: APA Justice, Asian American Advancing Justice | AAJC, Asian American Scholar Forum, Committee of 100

Moderator: [Michael German](#), Retired Fellow, Brennan Center for Justice

Speakers:

- [Kaohly Her](#), Mayor, St. Paul, Minnesota
- [Saira Hussain](#), Senior Staff Attorney, Electronic Frontier Foundation
- [Xiaoxing Xi](#), Laura H. Carnell Professor of Physics, Temple University
- [John Yang](#), President and Executive Director, Asian Americans Advancing Justice | AAJC


DESCRIPTION: Masked, heavily armed federal agents are roaming through American neighborhoods aggressively targeting anyone they feel does not belong, often using race and ethnicity as a factor to determine who is selected for arrest, detention, and deportation. News reports indicate that Immigration agents are using advanced technological tools and electronic surveillance authorities to create and exploit vast intelligence databases to further the Trump administration's mass deportation policy. Adding urgency to these concerns, Section 702 of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act — one of the government's most powerful surveillance tools — is set to expire on April 20, 2026, and the outcome of its reauthorization will have profound implications for the civil liberties of all Americans.

This lawless approach to immigration enforcement has a direct effect on AAPI communities. US law enforcement and intelligence agencies have long treated Asian Americans unfairly as a suspect community. Our earliest immigration laws, like the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, singled them out for disparate treatment based on their race and national origin, and the Trump administration has repeatedly threatened to invoke the Alien Enemies Act, last used to intern Japanese Americans during World War II. The webinar will provide an update of the current situation, and explain how this immigration crackdown is fueled by technological innovations and electronic surveillance powers originally developed to protect Americans from foreign terrorists, now turned inward to target Americans.

REGISTRATION: <https://bit.ly/3N5BbEy>

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
March 11, 2026

PRESS CONTACT:
James Kwon | (202) 909-7311



Trump's Immigration Policies are Terrorizing Asian Communities, CAPAC and Minnesota Leaders Warn

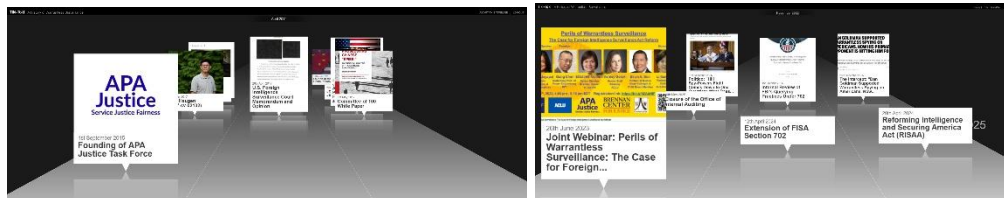


On March 10, 2026, U.S. Representative **Grace Meng** 孟昭文, Chair of the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus, led a virtual press conference with the Minnesota State Asian Pacific Caucus and Minnesota-based community organizations to highlight the devastating impacts of the Trump administration's immigration policies on Asian communities.

CAPAC Chair Meng was joined by Minnesota State Representative **Ethan Cha**, Chair of the Minnesota Asian Pacific Caucus; Minnesota State Representative **Liz Lee**, Secretary of the National Asian Pacific American Caucus of State Legislators; **Xay Yang**, Executive Director of Transforming Generations; **Quyên Đình**, Executive Director of the Southeast Asia Resource Action Center (SEARAC); **Chhaya Chhoum**, Executive Director of the Southeast Asian Freedom Network (SEAFN); and **ThaoMee Xiong**, Executive Director of the Coalition of Asian American Leaders.

Watch a video of the virtual press conference here: <https://bit.ly/4lu1VeM>

Timeline Visualization of U.S. Mass Surveillance



As Congress prepares to decide the fate of Section 702 of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act before its April 20, 2026 expiration, APA Justice has published a comprehensive interactive timeline tracing the history of warrantless surveillance in the United States — and the AAPI community's place within it. We thank **Madeleine Gable**, Communications Associate, for its development.

The timeline, available at <https://bit.ly/MassSurveillanceTimeline>, tells a sobering story that stretches across more than five decades.

The Foundation: From Katz to FISA

The modern legal framework for surveillance began with the Supreme Court's landmark 1967 *Katz v. United States* decision, which redefined what constitutes a "search" under the Fourth Amendment. A decade later, the Watergate scandal — and the revelation that President **Richard Nixon** had abused intelligence powers for political purposes — led directly to the enactment of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act in 1978, which was intended to place judicial oversight over national security surveillance for the first time.

After 9/11: The Surveillance State Expands

The September 11 attacks fundamentally transformed the scope of government surveillance. Months afterward, President **George W. Bush** secretly authorized the National Security Agency (NSA) to conduct warrantless surveillance of international phone calls and emails involving people inside the United States — a dramatic departure from FISA's framework. Congress later codified this expansion through the Protect America Act of 2007 and then the FISA Amendments Act of 2008, which established Section 702 as a permanent legal authority. Though nominally targeting non-U.S. persons abroad, Section 702 has become, in practice, a significant source of warrantless access to Americans' communications — a fact dramatically confirmed by **Edward Snowden's** disclosures in 2013. In 2024, Congress again re-authorized Section 702, and expanded the government's power to use the data collected through 702 for vetting immigrants and non-US citizens traveling to the US.

The AAPI Community in the Crosshairs

The timeline makes clear that the AAPI community has never been a bystander in this history — it has been a target. The 1999 case of Dr. **Wen Ho Lee 李文和**, a Los Alamos scientist falsely accused of spying for China, foreshadowed a pattern of racial profiling under national security authorities that would intensify in the years ahead. In 2015, APA Justice was founded specifically in response to a wave of prosecutions of innocent Chinese Americans accused of espionage — cases that were subsequently dismissed without explanation or apology.

In 2017, Temple University Professor **Xiaoxing Xi 郝小星** filed a civil rights lawsuit challenging the government's use of FISA and the FBI's targeting of Asian American scientists — a case that sits at the heart of the surveillance reform debate today. That same year, APA Justice launched its FISA Watch website, and a coalition of Asian American organizations urged Congress to reform Section 702 before its expiration.

A Pattern of Reauthorization Without Reform

Despite persistent advocacy, Congress has repeatedly reauthorized Section 702 without meaningful reform. In April 2024, the House passed a two-year extension while narrowly rejecting — by a 212-212 tie — a warrant requirement that civil liberties advocates consider essential. The resulting Reforming Intelligence and Securing America Act (RISAA) extended Section 702 only until April 20, 2026. FBI Director **Kash Patel** abruptly shut down the Office of Internal Auditing in May 2025 — a watchdog agency created specifically to oversee Section 702 compliance.

The 2026 Reauthorization: A Critical Moment — Now with an AI Dimension

With the April 20, 2026 deadline now weeks away, the stakes could not be higher — and a troubling new dimension has emerged. Section 702's reach has expanded well beyond its original purpose, and the same surveillance infrastructure is now being deployed in service of the Trump administration's mass deportation agenda — turning tools built to monitor foreign terrorists inward against American communities.

What is new and alarming in this reauthorization cycle is the intersection of Section 702 with artificial intelligence (AI). See below for a coalition letter being organized at this time.

Watch the timeline visualization at <https://bit.ly/MassSurveillanceTimeline> in 2D or 3D.

Action Alert: Sign On to Coalition Letter on FISA Section 702 Reauthorization

March XX, 2026

The Honorable Mike Johnson Speaker of the House U.S. House of Representatives	The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries Democratic Leader U.S. House of Representatives
The Honorable Steve Scalise Majority Leader U.S. House of Representatives	
The Honorable John Thune Majority Leader U.S. Senate	The Honorable Chuck Schumer Democratic Leader U.S. Senate

Re: Artificial Intelligence, Mass Surveillance, and the Reauthorization of Section 702 of FISA

Asian Americans Advancing Justice | AAJC, Stop AAPI Hate, and the Asian American Scholars Forum are urging community partners and allies to sign on to an important coalition letter calling for meaningful reform of Section 702 of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA) as it expires on April 20, 2026.

Section 702 was enacted in 2008 to authorize intelligence agencies to collect communications from non-U.S. persons located outside the United States without a warrant. Over the past 15 years, however, it has undergone significant mission creep and has become a substantial source of warrantless access to the communications of American citizens — raising serious concerns about government surveillance overreach.

Asian Americans and Arab, Middle Eastern, Muslim, and South Asian (AMEMSA) communities are likely overrepresented in data collected under Section 702, increasing the risk that these communities will be subjected to "backdoor searches" that further infringe on their privacy. This is not an abstract concern — it reflects a persistent legacy of racial profiling and discrimination against these communities in the name of national security, from the Chinese Exclusion Act to the post-9/11 surveillance dragnet. Congress should not reauthorize Section 702 without first requiring the government to obtain a warrant before searching for Americans in Section 702 data, along with other critical reforms.

The coalition letter addresses the alarming intersection of Section 702 and artificial intelligence. It responds directly to recent reporting by the *New York Times* that the Department of Defense is requiring AI companies it contracts with to allow their technology to enable mass domestic surveillance through the use and analysis of commercial bulk data on Americans — including

geolocation and web browsing data. The letter urges lawmakers not to reauthorize FISA Section 702 without closing the data broker loophole and enacting other substantive reforms.

The FISA 702 reform coalition urge all community organizations and allies to review and sign on to this letter as soon as possible: <https://bit.ly/3P3lOrV>. The reauthorization of Section 702 without adequate reform would leave AAPI communities — and all Americans — vulnerable to the same unchecked surveillance powers that are already being used to fuel the Trump administration's mass deportation crackdown. The time to act is now.

Deadline to sign on to the letter is Close of Business, Friday, March 13, 2026.

Please reach out to **Joanna YangQing Derman** at jderman@advancingjustice-aaajc.org or **Dennis Jing** at djing@advancingjustice-aaajc.org if you have any questions about the letter to Congress or sign on form.

***Politico*: Federal Judges Across the Country Blame ICE and DOJ Leadership**

POLITICO

Judges say ICE, DOJ leaders are putting rank-and-file lawyers in 'an impossible position'

The deluge of lawsuits in response to the administration's mass detention policy has put DOJ's line attorneys in uncomfortable spots.

According to *Politico* on March 10, 2026, a striking pattern has emerged in federal courtrooms across the country: judges who are furious over missed deadlines, defied court orders, and stonewalling in immigration cases are going out of their way to distinguish between the Justice Department's front-line attorneys and the political leadership directing them — and they are placing the blame squarely on the latter.

The Trump administration's mass deportation push has triggered a deluge of emergency lawsuits from Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) detainees, overwhelming court dockets and exposing a chaotic and often lawless enforcement operation. DOJ line attorneys have been thrust into courtrooms without adequate information, sometimes unable to reach their ICE counterparts, and asked to defend detention practices that judges have overwhelmingly ruled illegal. Some have resigned or been fired, further straining already understaffed offices.

The frustration on the bench has been pointed and public. U.S. District Judge **Patrick Schiltz**, a George W. Bush appointee in Minnesota, wrote in a recent opinion that his colleagues had been "extraordinarily patient with the government attorneys, recognizing that they have been put in an impossible position" — placing blame instead on an administration that sent thousands of ICE agents to Minnesota "without making any provision for handling the hundreds of lawsuits that were sure to follow." In New Jersey, U.S. District Judge **Michael Farbiarz** was equally direct after the Justice Department acknowledged dozens of court order violations: "The main problem is on ICE's side of the line. In response to the Court's order as to going-forward compliance measures, nothing came back from ICE. Nothing about how it might improve its internal processes. Or its training. Or its supervision. ... No commitment to do anything at all. And no statement of 'regret.'"

The pattern is consistent across jurisdictions. In West Virginia, a Clinton appointee praised DOJ line attorneys as "responsive and professional" while noting that "the problem lies in the attorneys' clients, federal government actors, who have offered no evidence that they have seen or even care about the legal rulings of this district." In Pennsylvania, a judge ruling on an unrelated matter similarly took care to exempt front-line DOJ staff from his criticism of administration leadership.

For the AAPI community, this matters. The same ICE enforcement machine that is flouting court orders nationwide is the one that has been racially profiling Asian Americans, conducting warrantless surveillance, and threatening to invoke the Alien Enemies Act. The judiciary is pushing back — but as these cases make clear, the courts can only do so much when the administration treats judicial oversight as an obstacle rather than a constraint.

Read the *Politico* report: <https://politi.co/4b5dUfb>

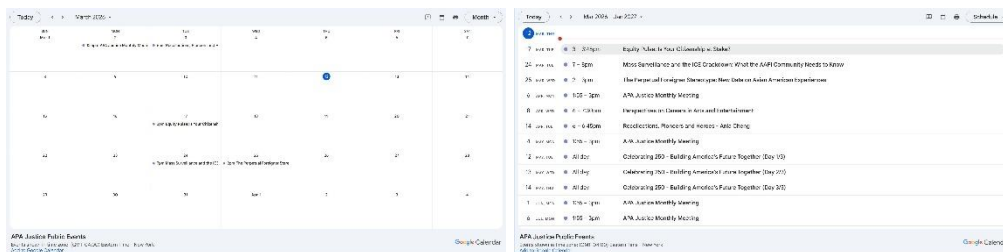
Update from National APA Museum Commission



During the March 2 APA Justice monthly meeting, Co-Chair **Chiling Tong 董继玲** and Executive Director **Krystal Ka'ai** gave a joint presentation about the bipartisan, congressionally appointed Commission to Study the Potential Creation of a National Museum of Asian Pacific American History and Culture. The commission, created through legislation authored by CAPAC Chairwoman **Grace Meng 孟昭文**, is charged with delivering a comprehensive plan of action to the U.S. Congress and the President that will lay the groundwork for Congressional authorization of a national museum dedicated to honoring the achievements, progress, and lasting impact of Asian Pacific Americans. The Commission is currently accepting public comments through June 30, 2026 that can be submitted online at https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfftqwX_3tTV-RLfvL2pkD8-Msc5n98xoNe5R6EHWclpcXX6w/viewform. Learn more about the Commission and sign up for one of their upcoming listening sessions at <https://nationalapamuseum.org/>

News and Activities for the Communities

1. APA Justice Community Calendar



Upcoming Events:

- 2026/03/17 Equity Pulse: Is Your Citizenship at Stake?
- 2026/03/24 Mass Surveillance and the ICE Crackdown: What the AAPI Community Needs to Know
- 2026/03/25 The Perpetual Foreigner Stereotype: New Data on Asian American Experiences
- 2026/04/06 APA Justice Monthly Meeting
- 2026/04/08 Perspectives on Careers in Arts and Entertainment
- 2026/04/14 Recollections, Pioneers and Heroes - Anla Cheng

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

2. AAUC Town Hall: In Challenging Times, Our Voices Matter



WHAT: In Challenging Times, Our Voices Matter

WHEN: March 19, 2026, 1:00 pm ET

WHERE: Online Town Hall

HOST: Asian American Unity Coalition

DESCRIPTION: Many Asian Americans are feeling the weight of today's global conflicts, especially with the war in Iran. The news is painful and the uncertainty is real, leaving us searching for clarity and a sense of grounding.

At moments like this, it becomes even more important to remember who we are as a community and the role we have played and continue to play in shaping America's values, resilience, and moral leadership.

REGISTRATION: https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/pEMGKU_qQMCxjFNlwkatDw#/registration

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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.

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