

In This Issue #375

- 2026/02/02 APA Justice Monthly Meeting
- GAO: Agencies Should Assess Safeguards Against Discrimination
- Alex Pretti: Another U.S. Citizen Shot Dead in Minneapolis
- Hmong Americans Among ICE Targets
- News and Activities for the Communities

2026/02/02 APA Justice Monthly Meeting

The next APA Justice monthly meeting will be held on Monday, February 2, 2026, starting at 1:55 pm ET.

Rep. **Judy Chu**, Chair Emerita of the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus, will deliver a New Year of the Fire Horse message and a review of 2025 via video, 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 confirmed distinguished speakers:

- **Frank Wu**, President, Queen's College, City University of New York
- **Rosie Levine**, Executive Director, US-China Education Trust
- **Elizabeth Rao**, daughter of Dr. Jane Wu, and Attorney **Tom Geoghegan**, Despres, Schwartz, & Geoghegan, Ltd.

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 deadline for signing the [coalition letter](#) by faculty members to support justice & honor the memory of Dr. Jane Wu is January 29, 2026, 12 pm ET.

Effective January 1, 2026, Dr. **Steven Pei** has stepped down from his role as Co-Organizer of APA Justice. As a result, Dr. Pei no longer represents APA Justice. Please direct all APA Justice matters to Jeremy Wu and Vincent Wang, Co-Organizers. We thank Dr. Pei for his dedicated service over the past few years and wish him continued success in the future.

GAO: Agencies Should Assess Safeguards Against Discrimination

GAO United States Government Accountability Office Report to Congressional Requesters January 2026 RESEARCH SECURITY Agencies Should Assess Safeguards Against Discrimination	Extent to Which Selected Agencies Have Adopted Safeguards to Prevent Discrimination While Addressing Improper Foreign Influence				
	Transparent improper foreign influence review processes	Collection and use of demographic data to assess agency processes	Multiple levels of review in improper foreign influence reviews	Training agency staff in non-discrimination in improper foreign influence reviews	Leadership commitment to non-discrimination in improper foreign influence reviews
Department of Defense	●	○	●	●	○
Department of Energy	●	○	●	●	●
National Aeronautics and Space Administration	●	○	●	○	○
National Institutes of Health	●	●	●	○	●
National Science Foundation	●	○	●	●	●

● = Fully adopted ● = Partially adopted or plan in development; ○ = Not adopted
Source: GAO analysis of selected agencies' documents and interviews. | GAO-26-107544

On January 22, 2026, the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) released Report 26-107544, [“Research Security: Agencies Should Assess Safeguards Against Discrimination,”](#) in response to concerns raised by members of Congress regarding potential discrimination in federal agencies' research security reviews. The report examines whether federal agencies ensure that their research security processes are free from discrimination based on race, ethnicity, or national origin.

While efforts to counter improper foreign influence are essential to protecting taxpayer-funded research, universities, civil society organizations, and other stakeholders have warned that these initiatives risk disproportionately targeting certain demographic groups—particularly scientists of Chinese or Asian descent.

GAO identified five core safeguards necessary to prevent discrimination in research security processes:

- Transparent improper foreign influence review processes.
- Collection and use of demographic data to assess agency processes.
- Multiple levels of review in improper foreign influence reviews.

- Training agency staff in nondiscrimination practices.
- Leadership commitment to nondiscrimination.

GAO assessed the implementation of these safeguards across five federal agencies—DOD, DOE, NASA, NIH, and NSF—which provided the largest share of extramural federal research funding in FY 2023 (October 1, 2022 – September 30, 2023).

The report concludes that agencies must balance the need to protect federally funded research from improper foreign influence with their legal and ethical obligation to ensure nondiscrimination. Systematic assessment of safeguards, GAO found, is essential to providing meaningful assurance that discriminatory practices do not occur.

GAO also issued seven formal recommendations to improve transparency, documentation, and oversight of nondiscrimination safeguards. These recommendations are publicly posted, tracked online, and will be updated as agencies take action to implement them.

Recommendations for Executive Action

Agency Affected	Recommendation	Status
National Science Foundation	The Director of the NSF should ensure that the Office of the Chief of Research Security Strategy and Policy, or the appropriate office within NSF, document an interim risk mitigation process for its TRUST pilot while continuing to develop a final process. (Recommendation 1)	<div>Open</div> <p>When we confirm what actions the agency has taken in response to this recommendation, we will provide updated information.</p>
National Aeronautics and Space Administration	The Administrator of NASA should ensure that the appropriate office document how its interim process addresses risk assessment criteria, remediation steps, and due process rights for research institutions or individuals as it continues to develop its final research security process. (Recommendation 2)	<div>Open</div> <p>When we confirm what actions the agency has taken in response to this recommendation, we will provide updated information.</p>
Department of Defense	The Secretary of Defense should ensure that the Under Secretary of Defense for Research and Engineering, or the appropriate office within DOD, assess the agency's research security processes to determine whether current safeguards provide reasonable assurance that discrimination will not occur and whether any additional safeguards would be practical and beneficial. (Recommendation 3)	<div>Open</div> <p>When we confirm what actions the agency has taken in response to this recommendation, we will provide updated information.</p>
Department of Energy	The Secretary of Energy should ensure that the Research, Technology, and Economic Security Office, or the appropriate office within DOE, assess the agency's research security processes to determine whether current safeguards provide reasonable assurance that discrimination will not occur and whether any additional safeguards would be practical and beneficial. (Recommendation 4)	<div>Open</div> <p>When we confirm what actions the agency has taken in response to this recommendation, we will provide updated information.</p>
National Aeronautics and Space Administration	The Administrator of NASA should ensure that the appropriate office assess the agency's research security processes to determine whether current safeguards provide reasonable assurance that discrimination will not occur and whether any additional safeguards would be practical and beneficial. (Recommendation 5)	<div>Open</div> <p>When we confirm what actions the agency has taken in response to this recommendation, we will provide updated information.</p>
National Institutes of Health	The Director of NIH should ensure that the Office of Extramural Research, or the appropriate office within NIH, assess the agency's research security processes to determine whether current safeguards provide reasonable assurance that discrimination will not occur and whether any additional safeguards would be practical and beneficial. (Recommendation 6)	<div>Open</div> <p>When we confirm what actions the agency has taken in response to this recommendation, we will provide updated information.</p>
National Science Foundation	The Director of NSF should ensure that the Office of the Chief of Research Security Strategy and Policy, or the appropriate office within NSF, assess the agency's research security processes to determine whether current safeguards provide reasonable assurance that discrimination will not occur and whether any additional safeguards would be practical and beneficial. (Recommendation 7)	<div>Open</div> <p>When we confirm what actions the agency has taken in response to this recommendation, we will provide updated information.</p>

GAO Contact:

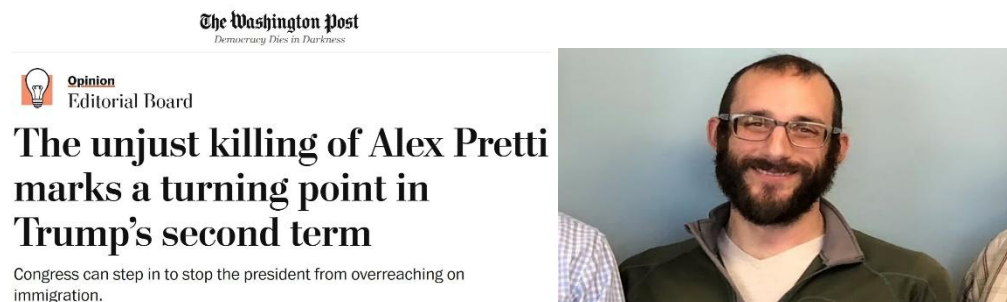
Hilary Benedict, Acting Director, Science, Technology Assessment, and Analytics,
at benedicth@gao.gov

GAO Report:

<https://www.gao.gov/products/gao-26-107544>

APA Justice will continue to analyze the findings and provide updates on the implementation and implications of this report.

Alex Pretti: Another U.S. Citizen Shot Dead in Minneapolis



According to multiple media reports, the fatal shooting of **Alex Pretti**, a 37-year-old intensive care nurse at the Minneapolis VA Health Care System, during a federal immigration enforcement action on January 24, 2026 has become a major national story, prompting protests, legal action, and bipartisan calls for accountability. Pretti was shot multiple times by two U.S. Border Patrol agents in south Minneapolis as he filmed and attempted to assist a woman during an enforcement operation.

Pretti's death occurred 17 days after **Renee Good** was fatally shot by an ICE agent. A third, non-fatal shooting involved a man wounded in the leg on January 14. The shooting locations for Good and Pretti in Minneapolis were about one mile apart.

Federal authorities initially claimed that Pretti "approached" agents with a handgun. However, widely circulated [video footage](#) and eyewitness accounts indicate that he was holding a phone—not a weapon—and was attempting to help another person when he was tackled and killed. Pretti was a lawful gun owner with a valid permit, had no criminal history, and was widely described by family, neighbors, and colleagues as compassionate and deeply committed to caring for others, particularly veterans.

Public response has been swift and substantial. A [GoFundMe](#) campaign established for Pretti's family surpassed \$1 million within days, reflecting widespread outrage and community support.

Editorial coverage has also been sharply critical. A *Washington Post* [editorial](#) framed Pretti's death as emblematic of broader concerns about the overreach and expanding role of federal immigration enforcement in U.S. cities and the erosion of civil liberties during the Trump administration's second term, underscoring inconsistencies in official accounts and the urgent need for transparency and independent review.

The [Military.com](#) profile further highlighted Pretti's character and service, focusing on his work as a VA nurse and his concern about immigration enforcement practices. The report noted that local law enforcement leaders rejected the federal narrative of events and called for a cooperative, independent investigation to establish what occurred.

Amid conflicting accounts and concerns that federal authorities restricted state investigators' access to the scene, Minnesota Attorney General **Keith Ellison**, joined by state and local officials, filed a lawsuit to preserve all evidence related to the killing. A federal judge granted a temporary restraining order barring the Department of Homeland Security and its components from altering or destroying evidence. The lawsuit has intensified national scrutiny of federal law-enforcement accountability and reinforced public demands for a full, independent investigation.

Members of Congress from both parties have also responded forcefully. Senator **Bill Cassidy** (R-La.) described the incident as "incredibly disturbing" and called for a joint federal-state investigation, warning that the credibility of ICE and DHS is at stake. Senator **Thom Tillis** (R-N.C.) urged a "thorough and impartial investigation," while Senator **Lisa Murkowski** (R-Alaska) emphasized that immigration agents "do not have carte blanche" in the use of force. On the Democratic side, Senator **Tina Smith** (D-Minn.) accused federal authorities of a potential cover-up, and Senate Majority Leader **Chuck Schumer** (D-N.Y.) warned that DHS funding could face opposition absent comprehensive oversight. Several House members, including Representatives **Michael McCaul** and **Andrew Garbarino**, have called for hearings and formal review of immigration enforcement practices.

On January 27, 2026, the Trump administration announced that **Tom Homan** was going to Minnesota to oversee ICE operations in the state as Border Patrol Commander **Gregory Bovino** and several other Border Patrol agents are expected to move out of Minneapolis. Bovino has been stripped of his title "commander at large" of the Border Patrol and will return to his former job as chief patrol agent along part of the U.S.-Mexico border, where he is expected to retire soon. Two agents were put on administrative leave.

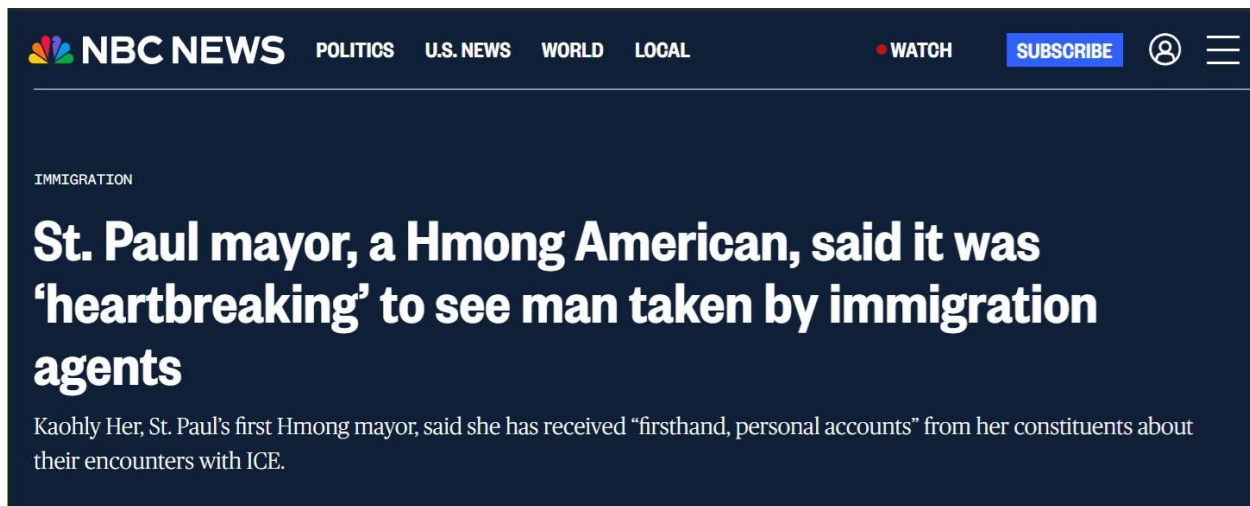
Within hours of Pretti's death, Bovino asserted that Pretti "wanted to ... massacre law enforcement," while DHS Secretary **Kristi Noem** claimed that Pretti was "brandishing" a weapon and acting "violently" toward officers. Neither provided supporting evidence, and their statements were contradicted by available video footage.

A federal judge in Minnesota has ordered the acting head of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, **Todd M. Lyons**, to personally appear in court and warned of possible contempt

proceedings, citing ICE's repeated failure to comply with court-ordered bond hearings for detained immigrants. Chief U.S. District Judge **Patrick J. Schiltz** said the agency has repeatedly flouted dozens of court orders, including by extending detentions or transferring detainees out of state despite explicit judicial directives. Calling the situation "extraordinary," Schiltz said lesser measures had failed, setting up a potential confrontation between the federal judiciary and the Trump administration amid a surge of ICE enforcement in the Minneapolis region that has overwhelmed local courts and drawn sharp judicial criticism of the government's conduct.

Taken together, the public reaction, legal action, and congressional response underscore the national significance of Alex Pretti's tragic death—and the rapidly growing demand for accountability, transparency, and clear limits on federal law-enforcement authority.

Hmong Americans Among ICE Targets

A screenshot of an NBC News article header. The top navigation bar is dark blue with the NBC News logo on the left, followed by links for POLITICS, U.S. NEWS, WORLD, and LOCAL. On the right are links for WATCH, a blue SUBSCRIBE button, and user account icons. Below the navigation bar, the word "IMMIGRATION" is written in small white capital letters. The main headline is in large, bold, white text: "St. Paul mayor, a Hmong American, said it was 'heartbreaking' to see man taken by immigration agents". Below the headline is a sub-headline in smaller white text: "Kaohly Her, St. Paul's first Hmong mayor, said she has received 'firsthand, personal accounts' from her constituents about their encounters with ICE."

According to [NBC News](#) on January 21, 2026, St. Paul Mayor **Kaohly Her**, the city's first Hmong and Asian American mayor, said it was "heartbreaking" to witness recent federal immigration enforcement actions in Minnesota, including the arrest of Hmong American U.S. citizen **ChongLy Scott Thao** and the fatal shooting of another U.S. citizen, **Renee Good**, during a separate operation. Speaking to *KARE* just days after taking office, Her said, "Nobody ever comes into an office and within the third day of being in office there's an ICE shooting," adding that moments like this define leadership: "This is the moment in which you are asked to lead, and so you step up and you lead." St. Paul is home to the nation's largest urban Hmong population, and Her said the incidents have deeply shaken that community.

Her described watching video of Thao being removed from his home in freezing conditions as particularly disturbing, noting her personal connection to the family. "It was heartbreaking to

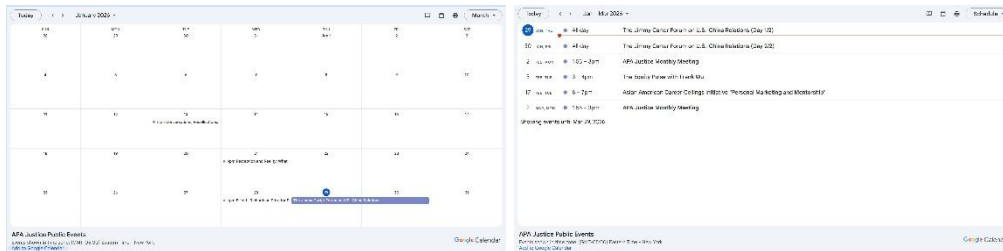
watch somebody get dragged out of their home,” she said. “I don’t know how anybody looking at that could ever justify the treatment of another human being that way.” Thao’s family said federal agents did not present a warrant or ask for identification and disputed DHS claims that the operation targeted suspected sex offenders living at the residence. Her said she has since received “firsthand, personal accounts” from constituents describing aggressive enforcement tactics, including agents “going door to door” and “targeting you by the way that you look and the way that you sound.”

The clash has escalated into lawsuits by Minnesota cities and the state to halt federal deployments, followed by Justice Department subpoenas of state and local leaders—developments that underscore intensifying tensions over immigration enforcement, civil liberties, and federal-local authority.

Read the *NBC News* report: <https://nbcnews.to/4qKFS5g>

News and Activities for the Communities

1. APA Justice Community Calendar



Upcoming Events:

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

2026/02/02 APA Justice Monthly Meeting

2026/02/03 The Equity Pulse with Frank Wu

2026/02/17 Asian American Career Ceilings Initiative "Personal Marketing and Mentorship"

2026/03/02 APA Justice Monthly Meeting

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

2. Asian American Career Ceilings Initiative "Personal Marketing and Mentorship"



Committee of 100

Asian American CAREER CEILINGS

Committee of 100

Asian American Career Ceilings Initiative

"Personal Marketing and Mentorship"

February 17, 2026 from 6 pm ET to 7 pm ET

WHAT: Asian American Career Ceilings Initiative "Personal Marketing and Mentorship"

WHEN: February 17, 2026, 6:00 pm - 7:00 pm ET

WHERE: Webinar

HOST: Committee of 100

Moderator: **Peter Young**, Committee of 100 Board Member and New York Regional Chair, and Chair of the Asian American Career Ceilings Initiative

Speakers:

- **Raj Gupta**, Co-Chair of the Board of Advisors, Johns Hopkins GUPTA-KLINSKY India Institute; Former CEO, Rohm and Hass
- **Bob Lee**, Chairman of the Board, Blue Shield of California
- **Deb Liu**, former President & CEO of Ancestry

DESCRIPTION: Throughout the many events C100 has held over the years, one of the observations that comes out repeatedly is the importance of engaging in effective personal marketing, having a strong network inside and outside of the organizations that you are part of, and developing mentors. This event will feature insights from three accomplished panelists who have expertise on this topic from their current professional responsibilities as well as their own personal careers.

REGISTRATION: <https://c100-2-17-2026.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 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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