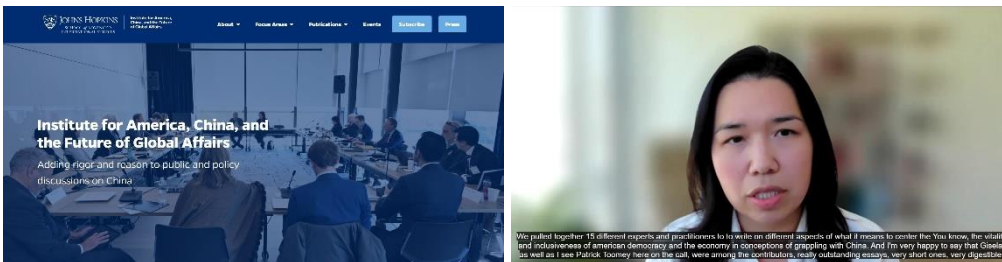


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The Institute for America, China, and the Future of Global Affairs



Jessica Chen Weiss is Founding Faculty Director of the Institute for America, China, and the Future of Global Affairs (ACF), SAIS, Johns Hopkins University.

During the APA Justice monthly meeting on March 3, 2025, Jessica introduced ACF, newly launched in February 2025, that aims to enhance the rigor and depth of public and policy discussions on China, emphasizing civil liberties, inclusiveness, and democracy as central to U.S. foreign policy.

Unlike other China-focused think tanks, ACF seeks to foster evidence-based dialogue among experts and practitioners while remaining neutral on policy stances. The institute was launched alongside the report "[Getting China Right at Home](#)," a collection of essays by 15 experts, including contributions from **Gisella Perez Kusakawa** of Asian American Scholar Forum and **Patrick Toomey** of ACLU. Seven of the 15 essays in the conceptions of grappling with China address issues of civil liberties, transnational oppression, and discrimination against Asian Americans.

ACF seeks to fill a gap in Washington's foreign policy conversations by addressing the domestic consequences of U.S.-China relations, ensuring that civil rights and inclusivity are not sidelined.

Jessica emphasized that these issues are not merely collateral damage but are fundamental to formulating sound China policies.

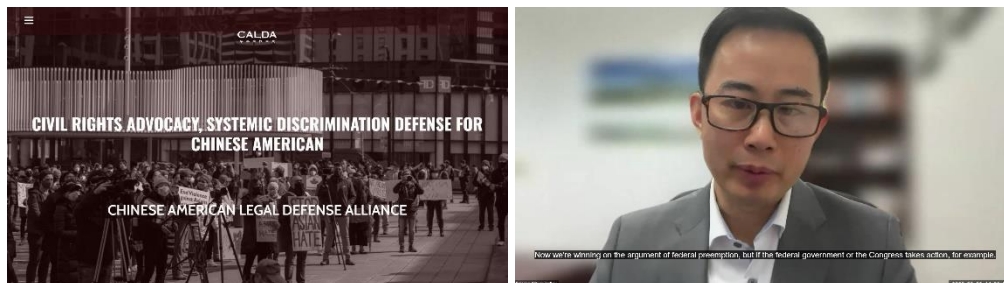
There are headwinds, but the institute operates under four guiding principles: rigor in research, humility in acknowledging complexity, civility in discussions, and creativity in forward-thinking solutions. This approach is intended to bridge academia and policymaking, fostering long-term strategies that account for both national security and civil liberties.

This spring, ACF will focus on disseminating its research findings through meetings with congressional offices, government agencies, and policy stakeholders to encourage two-way dialogue. The institute will also launch an ideas series spotlighting key policy areas while cultivating a new generation of experts who integrate academic insights with practical policymaking.

Jessica underscored the importance of maintaining open academic spaces for constructive discussions, ensuring that universities continue to contribute to informed policy debates. Through these initiatives, ACF aims to provide a central platform for nuanced, fact-based conversations on U.S.-China relations and their broader societal implications.

A summary of the March 3 APA Justice monthly meeting is being prepared at this time.

Updates from Chinese American Legal Defense Alliance



Clay Zhu 朱可亮 is Co-Founder, Chinese American Legal Defense Alliance 华美维权同盟 (CALDA).

During the APA Justice monthly meeting on March 3, 2025, Clay provided updates on ongoing civil rights litigation concerning discriminatory laws against Chinese Americans, particularly in Florida.

Clay's update covered two major legal battles: Florida's Alien Land Law (SB 264) and SB 846, which targets Chinese students and universities.

SB 264, a measure enacted nearly two years ago, is widely seen as part of the political positioning for the Florida Governor's presidential bid. This law has been challenged in federal court by CALDA in collaboration with the ACLU and other organizations. The case is currently before the 11th Circuit Court of Appeals, with a decision anticipated in the next couple months. Clay stressed that the ruling will have far-reaching implications, as it is the first appellate-level decision on such a state law. Given its higher legal authority, the ruling could influence similar laws in other states, particularly Texas, where similar measures are under consideration.

The second major case pertains to [Florida's SB 846](#), which prohibits universities from forming agreements with Chinese entities. In practice, this has led to the termination of Chinese graduate students' assistantship roles, severely impacting their academic and professional development.

For students working towards a master or Ph.D. degree, it is essential for them to working for the supervising professors as graduate assistants, so that they can go into the lab and work on real life projects and be able to collaborate on academic papers.

SB 846 basically bans all the international students from China to be graduate students at universities in Florida.

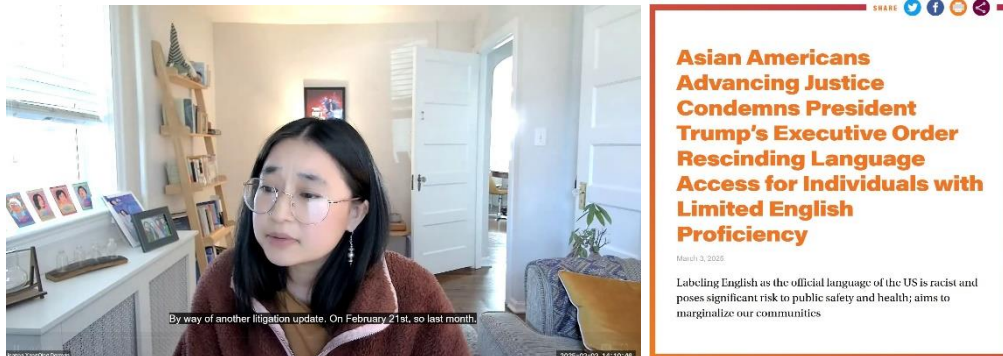
CALDA promptly filed a lawsuit challenging this law. Recently, a magistrate judge ruled in favor of one of CALDA's arguments, stating that Florida's law interferes with federal immigration authority. The judge accepted the argument that the law overreaches state power by infringing upon federal immigration regulations. However, the court did not rule in favor of the claim that the law is racially discriminatory.

The case is now under review by a district court judge, who is expected to issue a decision in the next month or two. Given historical precedent, it is likely that the district court judge will adopt the magistrate judge's recommendations. Nevertheless, Florida is expected to appeal the ruling, which would bring the case before the 11th Circuit Court of Appeals, similar to the Alien Land Law case.

Looking ahead, Clay noted that CALDA is closely monitoring legislative developments in Texas. If Texas enacts laws similar to SB 264 or SB 846, the organization is prepared to launch legal challenges to prevent further discriminatory measures. The outcomes of these lawsuits will not only shape the legal landscape in Florida but also set critical precedents that could influence policy decisions and judicial interpretations in other states.

Through these legal battles, CALDA continues to advocate for the rights of Chinese Americans, ensuring that unconstitutional and discriminatory policies are challenged in court. Clay's update highlights the ongoing efforts to protect civil rights and the broader implications of these cases for immigrant communities nationwide.

Updates from Advancing Justice | AAJC



During the APA Justice monthly meeting on March 3, 2025, **Joanna YangQing Derman**, Director of Anti-Profilng, Civil Rights & National Security Program at Advancing Justice | AAJC, reported that AAJC [strongly condemned](#) President Trump's executive order mandating English as the official U.S. language, calling it a racist attack on immigrant communities.

Joanna provided a litigation update, noting that a federal judge in Maryland temporarily blocked key parts of Trump's executive orders targeting DEI initiatives in the Federal government and corporate America, citing constitutional violations and harm to affected individuals and organizations.

AAJC is also tracking land law activities at state and federal levels, particularly in Texas, where lawmakers introduced SB 17 and HB 1849. AAJC is working with NAPABA and other groups to support advocacy efforts. At the federal level, they anticipate alien land bills and are coordinating opposition with allies, including CAPAC.

In addition, reports indicate that the Trump administration plans to invoke the Alien Enemies Act soon, with advocacy groups engaging lawmakers to oppose it. Lastly, Trump nominated John Eisenberg to lead the DOJ's National Security Division, raising concerns about a possible reinstatement of the China Initiative. AAJC is strategizing with partners to monitor his confirmation.

Trump Invokes 1798 Law; Defies Court Order; Rebuked by Chief Justice



According to multiple media reports, on March 15, 2025, President **Donald Trump** issued an executive order invoking the Alien Enemies Act of 1798, a wartime law granting the president broad authority to detain or deport noncitizens from "enemy nations" without due process. Trump's order claims the U.S. is facing an "invasion" by a Venezuelan gang allegedly acting on behalf of Venezuela's government.

Harvard Law Professor **Noah Feldman** [opined](#) that the Alien Enemies Act is a weak argument for deportation without a hearing - the U.S. is not at war with Venezuela, a gang is not a government, and it is not threatening invasion or incursion.

The Alien Enemies Act was last used during World War II to justify the internment of 120,000 persons of Japanese descent and has only been invoked twice before, during World War I and the War of 1812.

The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), Democracy Forward, and the ACLU of the District of Columbia [filed a lawsuit](#) against the Trump administration over Trump's expected unlawful and unprecedented invocation of the Alien Enemies Act— [J.G.G. v. Trump \(1:25-cv-00766\)](#).

Chief Judge **James E. Boasberg** of the D.C. Circuit Court issued an initial temporary restraining order (TRO) blocking the deportation of the five plaintiffs named in the lawsuit. Later that day, Judge Boasberg expanded the scope of the TRO to encompass all individuals at risk of removal under the Alien Enemies Act, thereby granting class certification. This expanded TRO now protects all immigrants who could be subject to deportation under the Act, preventing their removal from the United States until further legal proceedings determine the Act's applicability and constitutionality in this context.

The *Washington Post* [reported](#) that planes deporting 137 migrants under the act landed in El Salvador after Judge Boasberg ordered any such flights to return to the United States on March 15. Family members of some of those deported reportedly said their relatives are not gang members.

On March 17, Judge Boasberg ordered Trump officials to provide the next day a sworn declaration that no one was deported under the authority of the Alien Enemies Act after his verbal order was made to turn the planes around. The judge also ordered officials to detail when

the executive order was issued and provide a count of how many alleged gang members still in the United States are subject to the order.

The Trump administration's battle with the federal court system [escalated](#) sharply with government lawyers calling for the removal of Judge Boasberg and refusing to answer some questions in court.

On March 18, Trump called for the impeachment of Judge Boasberg, prompting **John G. Roberts Jr.**, Chief Justice of the United States to issue a rare and stern statement rejecting the idea and asserting the independence of the judiciary. "For more than two centuries, it has been established that impeachment is not an appropriate response to disagreement concerning a judicial decision," he wrote. "The normal appellate review process exists for that purpose."

On March 18, the Justice Department [refused](#) to answer questions from Judge Boasberg seeking more details about deportations carried out under the Alien Enemies Act, leading the judge to issue a new order for the information. "The Government maintains that there is no justification to order the provision of additional information, and that doing so would be inappropriate...if, however, the Court nevertheless orders the Government to provide additional details, the Court should do so through an in camera and ex parte declaration, in order to protect sensitive information bearing on foreign relations," the DOJ filing said.

Judge Boasberg responded to the filing a short time later, directing the government to answer his questions in a sealed court filing by noon March 19.

Judge Boasberg has substantial qualifications in handling national security matters, having served a seven-year term on the United States Foreign Intelligence Surveillance (FISA) Court beginning in May 2014. He was the Court's Presiding Judge from January 2020 to May 2021.

Judge Boasberg expressed frustration that the government had appeared to snub his order halting the deportations and refused to answer questions about its actions. He had reportedly summarized the government's position as "we don't care, we'll do what we want."

On March 19, *New York Times* [reported](#) that Judge Boasberg granted the government another day to share details on deportation flights, including what time two planes took off from U.S. soil and from where, what time they left U.S. airspace, and what time they landed in El Salvador.

On March 24, a federal appeals court will hear oral arguments on the Trump administration's request to lift the temporary block from Judge Boasberg.

APA Justice will continue to closely monitor and provide updates on this development.

Several organizations have issued statements on the invocation of the Alien Enemies Act, including:

- 2025/03/18 [Asian American Scholar Forum](#)
- 2025/03/17 [Asian American Advancing Justice](#)
- 2025/03/17 [Refugee International](#)
- 2025/03/16 [Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund](#)

WP: ‘Very dangerous’: Japanese Americans warn of Trump’s use of Alien Enemies Act



According to the [Washington Post](#) on March 19, 2025, during World War II, the U.S. government used the Alien Enemies Act to arrest thousands of Japanese, German, and Italian nationals, often without evidence or due process. **Russell Endo**, whose grandfather **Heigoro Endo** was detained under the law, has researched hundreds of such cases and found no evidence of disloyalty. “If you read the case files, they are completely innocent,” Endo said, emphasizing how the law lacked oversight and offered no recourse for those targeted. Now, with President **Donald Trump** invoking the same law to deport alleged Venezuelan gang members without hearings, Japanese American leaders fear history is repeating itself. Former Congressman **Mike Honda**, who was incarcerated as an infant under Executive Order 9066, warned that the law gives “too much power in the executive branch because it can be used at a whim.” He has worked with lawmakers to repeal the law, calling it unconstitutional and a violation of fundamental rights.

The personal impact of such policies extends across generations. **Larry Oda**, president of the Japanese American Citizens League, recalled how his father, **Junichi**, was arrested the day after a military exclusion zone was expanded in California, even though he had relocated to avoid internment. Junichi was sent to multiple incarceration camps, including one in Crystal City, Texas, where Oda was born. “One of the things that affected me the most was that myself and my family had done nothing wrong. We were targeted because of the way we looked,” he said. The trauma left a lasting fear of being unfairly imprisoned. The history of wartime detention highlights the broader dangers of discriminatory policies, as seen in Trump’s recent deportations, which a federal judge has already challenged. For Endo and others, the lesson is clear: “People are using a law that is very dangerous, and the government is abusing it.”

Recent Court Rulings Against Trump's Executive Actions



As of March 19, 2025, the number of lawsuits against President **Donald Trump's** executive actions reported by the [Just Security Litigation Tracker](#) has grown to 129 with two closed cases. The *New York Times* is [tracking court rulings](#) that have at least temporarily halted some of the president's initiatives. As of March 15, 2025, there were at least 46 such rulings.

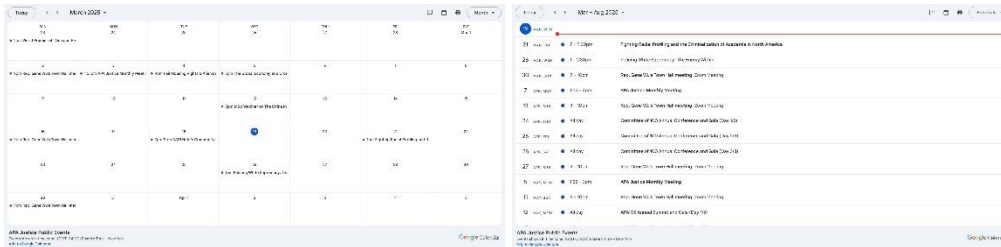
Some of the recent major rulings and related developments:

- On March 18, 2025, U.S. District Judge **Theodore D. Chuang** of the District of Maryland found efforts by **Elon Musk** and his team to permanently shutter the U.S. Agency for International Development likely violated the Constitution “in multiple ways” and robbed Congress of its authority to oversee the dissolution of an agency it created. Judge Chuang ordered that agency operations be partially restored and barred Musk’s team from engaging in any further work “related to the shutdown of U.S.A.I.D.” The ruling was issued in [Does 1-26 v. Musk \(8:25-cv-00462\)](#)
- On March 18, 2025, U.S. District Judge **Ana C. Reyes** of the District of Columbia blocked the Trump administration from banning transgender people from serving in the military until the lawsuit is decided. “The ban at bottom invokes derogatory language to target a vulnerable group in violation of the Fifth Amendment,” Judge Reyes wrote. The ruling was issued in [Talbot v. Trump \(1:25-cv-00240\)](#)
- On March 17, 2025, U.S District Judge **Julie Rubin** of Maryland ordered the U.S. Department of Education to reinstate numerous grants that support teacher-preparation programs. The ruling was issued in [American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education v. McMahon \(1:25-cv-00702\)](#)
- On March 13, 2025, U.S District Judge **William Alsup** of the Northern District of California ordered half a dozen federal agencies to “immediately” reinstate probationary employees fired last month as part of the Trump administration’s effort to rapidly shrink the federal workforce, calling the effort a “sham.” The ruling was issued in [American Federation Of Government Employees, AFL-CIO v. United States Office of Personnel Management \(3:25-cv-01780\)](#). On March 17, the Ninth Circuit [denied](#) the government’s request for an administrative stay.

- On March 14, 2025, U.S District Judge **James K. Bredar** of Maryland granted a temporary restraining order demanding the Trump administration reinstate federal probationary employees terminated on or after January 20. On March 18, the *Washington Post* [reported](#) that the Trump administration has moved to reinstate at least 24,000 federal probationary employees fired in Trump's push to shrink the government. The ruling was issued in [State of Maryland v. United States Department of Agriculture \(1:25-cv-00748\)](#)

News and Activities for the Communities

1. APA Justice Community Calendar



Upcoming Events:

2025/03/04 Fair Housing Rights & Alien Land Laws: Challenges and Advocacy for the Asian American Community

2025/03/05 The Global Economy at a Crossroads: U.S.-China in Focus

2025/03/12 MSU Webinar on China Initiative

2025/03/16 Rep. Gene Wu's Town Hall Meeting

2025/03/30 Rep. Gene Wu's Town Hall Meeting

2025/04/07 APA Justice Monthly Meeting

2025/04/13 Rep. Gene Wu's Town Hall Meeting

2025/04/24-26 Committee of 100 Annual Conference and Gala

2025/04/27 Rep. Gene Wu's Town Hall Meeting

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

###

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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