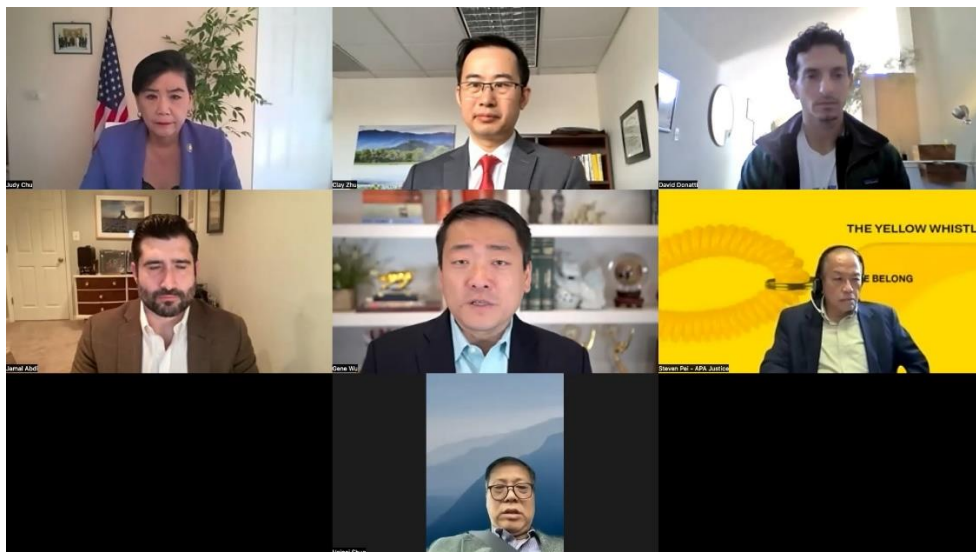


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Updates on Texas Senate Bill 147 and Opposition to Revival of Alien Land Laws

1. First Webinar - A Call to Stop SB 147 and All Alien Land Laws



The first in a mini-series of two webinars sponsored by [1882 Foundation](#), [APA Justice](#), [United Chinese Americans](#) was held on February 17, 2023. **Judy Chu**, Chair, Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus, opened the webinar with her remarks. Panelists included **Gene Wu**, Texas State Representative; **Jamal Abdi**, President, National Iranian American Council (NIAC); **David Donatti**, Staff Attorney, the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) of Texas; and **Clay Zhu**, Attorney and Co-Founder, Chinese American Legal Defense Alliance (CALDA). Professor **Steven Pei**, Co-Organizer of APA Justice, started, and **Haipei Shue**, President of United Chinese Americans, moderated the webinar. Watch the webinar at <https://bit.ly/3Z4wjzE> (video 1:27:51).

2. Second of a Mini Series of Webinars.

Historical Re-Hash
Alien Land Law and SB147

APA Justice
Service Justice Fairness
UCA
1882 FOUNDATION

Panelists

Gene Wu
Attorney and Texas State Representative
Appropriations Committee
Juvenile Justice and Family Issues Committee

Madeline Hsu
Mary Helen Thompson Centennial Professor
Professor of History and Asian American Studies
University of Texas at Austin

Carol Suzuki
Dickason Professorship
Professor of Law
School of Law
University of New Mexico at Albuquerque

Moderator

Janelle Wong
Professor of American Studies, Government and Politics
Asian American Studies
University of Maryland at College Park

Wednesday, 3/1, 6:30 PM EST/3:30 PM PST Registration: <http://bit.ly/3ld2uGp>

The second webinar titled "Historical Re-Hash - Alien Land Laws and SB147" will be held on Friday, March 1, 2023, starting at 6:30 pm ET/3:30 pm PT. The webinar will be moderated by Professor **Janelle Wong** of University of Maryland. Confirmed panelists are Texas State Representative **Gene Wu**, Professor **Madeline Hsu** of University of Texas at Austin, and Professor **Carol Suzuki** of University of New Mexico School of Law. **Ted Gong**, Executive Director of the 1882 Foundation will deliver opening remarks. Register for this webinar at <http://bit.ly/3ld2uGp>

3. Weekly Town Hall Meetings with Texas State Representative Gene Wu. Beginning on Sunday, February 19, 2023, Texas State Representative **Gene Wu** will hold town hall meetings with all Texas community groups and individuals starting at 8 pm CT every Sunday to exchange information and coordinate the next step. Everyone is welcome. Please register to attend: <http://bit.ly/3XI6tQX>. Representatives of major organizations and regional organizers are requested to send your credential to APAJ2023@gmail.com. A special personalized panelist link will be emailed to you. Representative Gene Wu

我希望以后每个周日晚上 8 时和德州的朋友们一起总结经验和商讨下一步的策略，欢迎大家注册参加，<http://bit.ly/3XI6tQX>，各主要团体和抗议组织的代表，请把你自己的简介发到 APAJ2023@gmail.com，可免注册，并且享有优先发言的权利，谢谢。德州州议员吴元之

4. Chin Lung and the Great Western Potato Mart



Thanks to Historical Record of Chinese Americans for leading us to the story of **Chin Lung**. According to the *Soundings Journal*, at the turn of the twentieth century, the grain market had fallen on hard times, but Los Angeles investors—wealthy from citrus, real estate, and oil—and San Franciscans, wealthy from the Comstock Lode, and other investors from the East and from Europe, began purchasing and reclaiming the rich peatlands of the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta.¶ These investors were soon leasing the lands to energetic farmers, many of them Asian immigrants. A major crop planted on these Delta farmlands was potatoes and Stockton became known throughout the United States as the “great western potato mart.”¶ Chin Lung was one of the first Chinese farmers to lease Delta farmland. In September 1901, he planted a crop of potatoes on his 1,100-acre lease just west of Stockton. Mr. Chin’s potato crop hit the Eastern markets nearly two months ahead of his competitors from other areas and he suddenly became wealthy.¶ Between 1901 and 1924, Chin Lung farmed at least 1,000 acres each season and he was the principal employer of Chinese laborers in San Joaquin County.¶ In 1910 Chin purchased 2,200 acres of Delta farmland of his own, northwest of Stockton near White Slough—the first agricultural property in San Joaquin County purchased by a Chinese.¶ Two years later Chin purchased the nearby Shin Kee Tract, named after the Sing Kee Store (correct spelling) that he owned on Sacramento Street in San Francisco. He grew potatoes, beans, onions, asparagus, and hay for seventy work horses.¶ Chin lost the store and his agricultural holdings in California and Oregon by 1923 as a result of the Alien Land Acts of 1920 and 1923. He farmed in Oregon until 1933, after which he retired and returned to his native China. Read the *Soundings Journal* article: <https://bit.ly/3IMLkbb>

5. Asian Texans for Justice Sign-on Letter. Asian Texan for Justice is asking the broader Texas community to join this letter opposing the Texas Senate Bill 147: <http://bit.ly/3IRpsez>. You can sign onto the letter here: <http://bit.ly/3k3wNaJ>. It has also developed a toolkit for community members to take action - contact the bill author, lieutenant governor, and governor to oppose the legislation: <http://bit.ly/3XK2L9J>. As legislation begins to move through the process, it will be updating the toolkit with updated calls to action for

testimony and more. Questions or comments should be directed to info@asiantexansforjustice.org

Media Opinions by Asian American Leaders

1. *San Francisco Chronicle*. On February 17, 2023, retired San Francisco Superior Court judges **Lillian Sing** and **Julie Tang** published an opinion titled "While Florida targets Black history, Texas Republicans plan to make life miserable for Asian Americans."¶ According to the opinion, while much of the country is rightfully preoccupied with Florida's efforts to eliminate African American history from schools, a quieter but equally dangerous racist development - Texas Senate Bill 147 (SB147) - is happening in Texas and beyond.¶ The ultra-conservative American Legislative Exchange Council is pushing many of these bills as a "model policy."¶ These laws will almost certainly have a disproportionate impact on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders because we are easier to identify — and will bolster the yellow peril view of us as forever foreigners in our own country.¶ Whatever the state of official diplomatic relations between countries, these sorts of anti-free market, race-based discriminatory restrictive covenants are anathema to our nation's values and have a disgraceful place in American history. SB147 ignores history to send the chilling message that questions Asian American loyalty to America — perpetuating the forever foreigner stereotype.¶ The nation just endured a 339 % increase in anti-Asian hate crimes last year. SB147 and similar legislation spreading across the country will target Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders anew.¶ The bills are xenophobic, unconstitutional and should not be passed. Read the *San Francisco Chronicle* opinion: <https://bit.ly/3YYpu2D>

2. *New York Daily News*. On February 17, 2023, Frank Wu, President of Queen's College, City University of New York, published an opinion titled "Being American and being Chinese."¶ According to the opinion, Chinese Americans, who number more than five million, face the worst dilemma as China and the United States enter a new phase of competition and conflict.¶ The question is asked again and again: which side are you on? No answer will likely satisfy the suspicious.¶ The situation of Chinese Americans verges on the untenable. Americans of Chinese descent include those whose ancestors came on the Mayflower and whose forebears were enslaved, thanks to intermarriage; and adoptees, whose parents would no doubt be accepted as white.¶ They also include descendants of laborers who built the transcontinental railroad, which united the nation after the Civil War, and who founded Chinatowns more than a century ago.¶ Some Chinese Americans arrived on these shores not from mainland China but from Cuba or Peru or Japan or Germany, because their grandparents left for those destinations before their parents migrated again. Many Chinese Americans came from Taiwan, their families having fought communism; or Hong Kong, themselves departing before the 1997 handover from Great Britain to Beijing.¶ Ironically, due to prejudice, the dissidents are not distinguished from the regime they protested. These individuals are not merely allies to the United States; they are in fact Americans.¶ It hardly mattered that the individuals who were sent to the hospital in critical condition from being kicked in the head or shoved down stairs were as vulnerable as the next person. Those with hostility in their hearts do not pause to check passports. The statistics show record rates of hate crimes directed at Asian Americans.¶ Meanwhile, Asian Americans were significantly overrepresented among the health care workers on the front lines, risking their own lives in order to tend to others. They even cared for those who requested service providers of a different race.¶ At the same time, without

much evidence once bias was stripped away, the government prosecuted respected professors on the theory they were spies stealing scientific secrets in an elaborate conspiracy. Every Chinese exchange student, government officials said explicitly, was a potential sleeper agent.¶ For Chinese Americans who have struggled to assimilate despite the objections of their own family, the effort verges on futile. America beckoned to them, promising freedom and opportunity. Its ideals are still strong.¶ The profound Black struggle for civil rights offers important lessons. Chinese Americans must participate in civic life. They cannot try to put their heads down and work harder. By exercising their rights, they fulfill their responsibilities. Only that engagement will ensure their equality. Read the *New York Daily News* Opinion: <http://bit.ly/3k1GXZq>

Media Reports

- On February 18, 2023, *CNN* reported on "History repeats itself with anti-China land ownership proposals."¶ According to the report, new efforts to bar Chinese citizens and others from owning property in Texas and other states echo the treatment of Asian people in the US more than 100 years ago, when Congress barred them from obtaining citizenship and multiple state laws restricted land ownership.¶ In Virginia, Gov. **Glenn Youngkin** is expected to sign legislation to bar citizens of countries the State Department has designated as "foreign adversaries" from owning agricultural land. Companies with deep ties to those countries would also be affected. Those countries currently include China, Russia, North Korea and Iran.¶ In Texas, a much broader proposal names those countries and bans citizens of them from owning any land whatsoever. The ban would presumably extend to legal immigrants living in the US. That bill is still working its way through the legislature but has the support of Gov. **Greg Abbott**.¶ The Texas proposal in particular specifically recalls a despicable chapter in US history, when so-called Alien Land Laws were passed in numerous states between the 1880s and 1920s to specifically bar Asian people from owning land. The California Alien Land Law was eventually overturned by the Supreme Court in 1952 for violating the 14th Amendment.¶ Chinese people were explicitly barred from immigration to the US for generations – from the 1880s, when Congress passed the Chinese Exclusion Act, until that law's repeal during World War II. So few Chinese people were allowed to immigrate for another generation after that until 1965 – 105 per year – that it amounted to a de facto ban.¶ "It's definitely sort of reinvoation of kind of what people in Asian American studies would refer to as 'Yellow Peril' fearmongering," said **Madeline Hsu**, a history professor and expert in Asian American studies at the University of Texas at Austin. "There are ways in which it resonates with what happened to Japanese Americans during World War II, where regardless of citizenship, regardless of nativity, they were racially categorized as enemy aliens." Read the *CNN* Report: <https://cnn.it/3INfkDO>.
- On February 17, 2023, KVUE reported on "Texas bill banning foreign citizens from buying land sparks outrage in Austin."¶ According to the report, outrage is growing over a bill filed in the Texas Legislature that would ban citizens and entities from China, Iran, North Korea and Russia from buying land in Texas.¶ Austinite **Victoria Li** believes the bill is a form of "xenophobia" and "racism."¶ **Eric Tang** is the director of the Center for Asian American Studies at the University of Texas at Austin and says this bill is reminiscent of a California State Bill from the 1900s known as the "Alien Land

Laws."¶ State Rep. **Gene Wu** (D-Houston) joined U.S. Congresswoman **Judy Chu** and other Asian community leaders to discuss the bill.¶ **Haipei Shue**, the president of the United Chinese Americans, explained that these bills don't just exist in Texas. These bills are also being introduced in Florida, New Jersey and Tennessee. Watch and read the KVUE report: <https://bit.ly/3YGVKaZ>

- On February 16, 2023, *NBC News* reported on "Chinese citizens in Texas are incensed over a proposal to ban them from buying property in the state."¶ According to the report, Asian residents say the legislation uses national security as a guise to further target and scapegoat their communities. They're angry, they say, and they're questioning whether they're truly welcome in Texas.¶ As a Chinese immigrant who became a U.S. citizen years ago, **Ling Luo** feels she's one of the lucky ones. But she remembers the promise the U.S. once held for her and now says that that dream is being crushed in the immigrants around her.¶ Luo started an activist group, the Asian American Leadership Council (AALC), specifically to push back against the bill, and she put it on the popular Chinese social network WeChat. Beyond spreading awareness of the bill, Luo and AALC have encouraged worried residents to write and call their legislators.¶ "Legislators use these kinds of bills to just play with the Chinese community here and appeal to their voter base," Luo said. "China won't get hurt at all, and the Chinese investors won't get hurt at all. It's the people here, the non-U.S. citizens, Chinese immigrants, who are the ones getting hurt and totally destroyed." <https://nbcnews.to/3EfEfGC>
- On February 1, 2023, *Forbes* reported on "Texas Bill: Many Immigrants, H-1B Visa Holders Can't Buy Property."¶ According to the report, Texas Senate Bill 147 may be part of a Republican "primary" battle between Texas Gov. Abbott and Florida Gov. **Ron DeSantis**, which has included both men sending migrants from the border to cities with Democratic mayors.¶ There are approximately 80,000 non-U.S. citizens born in the four countries who are residents of Texas. About 55,000 are employed and more than 5,000 are self-employed, including over 1,000 with incorporated businesses.¶ If the bill were to become law, an H-1B visa holder from France could buy a house, but one from China could not. A Ph.D. student from Russia at a Texas university would not be allowed to purchase property, but a student from Sweden could.¶ Individuals from the affected countries could start making decisions on where to work or study to avoid Texas. Companies might become alarmed if employees are treated differently under Texas law based on their place of birth. <http://bit.ly/3IAC9Uj>

Asian American Community News and Activities

1. Julie Su for Secretary of Labor. On February 17, 2023, Rep. **Judy Chu**, Chair of the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus (CAPAC) led 33 Members of Congress in sending a letter to President Biden in support of **Julie Su** for Secretary of Labor. Read the letter: <https://bit.ly/3YFVA3D>

2. Reps. Chu, Lieu, Meng, & Takano Statement on GOP Congressional Attacks on Dominic Ng. On January 17, 2023, Representatives **Judy Chu** (CA-28), **Ted Lieu** (CA-36), **Grace Meng** (NY-06), and **Mark Takano** (CA-39)—who are all leaders of the

Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus (CAPAC)—released a joint statement about a [recent letter](#) to the Federal Bureau of Investigation from Republican Members of Congress. The letter requests an investigation into whether **Dominic Ng**, President Biden’s recent [appointment](#) to be Chair of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Business Advisory Council (ABAC), had violated the Espionage Act. “As with every presidential appointee, Dominic Ng, who is Chinese American, has undergone an extensive vetting process and sworn an oath to support and defend the Constitution and serve the American public... No Chinese Americans—indeed no Americans—should face suspicions of disloyalty or treason based on their ethnicity, nation of origin, or that of their family members. That kind of profiling is beneath us all, particularly those entrusted with public office,” the statement said. Read the statement: <http://bit.ly/3ldzZbK>

3. White House Engagement with AANHPI Community. The White House Asian American (AA) and Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander (NHPI) newsletters and community will be launched in 2023. Bi-weekly virtual meetings start on Friday, February 24, 2023 at 3:00pm ET. Register here: <http://bit.ly/3Kfm5Zh>. On February 16, 2023, President Biden signed a new Executive Order, *Further Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government* to reaffirm and strengthen the Administration’s commitment to deliver equity and build an America in which all can prosper. Read the Factsheet here: <http://bit.ly/3IOIJNK>. In January 2023, the Biden-Harris Administration released its National Strategy to Advance Equity, Justice, and Opportunity for Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander (AA and NHPI) Communities. The new strategy, which comprises action plans prepared by 32 federal agencies—including all 15 executive departments in the President’s Cabinet—builds on the Administration’s broader equity agenda and details investments in AA and NHPI communities and priorities. Read the National Strategy: <https://bit.ly/3YYcb8N>

4. AASF Webinar - Know Your Rights! on Airport Enforcement and Border Harassment.

AASF
Asian American
Scholar Forum

Seminar speakers will include ACLU,
criminal & immigration legal experts

Know Your Rights!

on Airport Enforcement
and Border Harassment

Gisela Kusakawa
Asian American
Scholar Forum
Executive Director

Ashley Gorski
ACLU's National
Security Project
Senior Staff
Attorney

Gregory Z. Chen
American Immigration
Lawyers Association
Senior Director of
Government Relations

Brian A. Sun
Minton Rose
Fulbright US LLP
Partner

February 2, 2023
8:00-9:30pm ET

Register Here (Zoom) →

On February 2, 2023, Asian American Scholar Forum (AASF) hosted a webinar on Know Your Rights! on Airport Enforcement and Border Harassment. The event was moderated by **Gisela Kusakawa**, AASF Executive Director. Speakers included **Ashley Gorski**, Senior Staff Attorney, National Security Project, ACLU; **Gregory Chen**, Senior Director of Government Relations, American Immigration Lawyers Association; and **Brian Sun**, Partner, Norton, Rose, Fulbright US LLP. Watch the webinar at <https://bit.ly/3EmQIYT> (video 1:38:19)

5. Alliance of Chinese Americans San Diego (ACA). ACA is accepting applications for API Public Service Internship. It encourages college or incoming college students seeking pre-law, political science or related fields in public policy to complete an internship application for consideration. The API Public Service Internship Program aims to provide college students an opportunity to experience the inner workings of an elected office. The placed interns will work under the auspice of the elected office. They will undertake a variety of assignments, including day-to-day regimen of an elected official's office. They will assist on local events planning and assist staff on special projects that might include policy research and data gathering. Interns could also assist with constituent casework and opportunities for community outreach and engagement. For more information, visit <http://bit.ly/3EeahT1>

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