

Michael E. Horowitz  
Inspector General  
U.S. Department of Justice  
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.  
Suite 4706  
Washington, D.C. 20530-0001

June 21, 2016

RE: Call for Inspector General Investigation into Asian American espionage-related cases

Dear Mr. Horowitz,

As leading Asian American and Pacific Islander, civil rights and civil liberties organizations, we are writing to you to express concern over the recent pattern of Asian American and Pacific Islander scientists being arrested and indicted by federal law enforcement for espionage-related crimes, only to later have all charges against them dropped. We are requesting an independent investigation into the policies and practices that led to this apparent pattern and practice of wrongful prosecutions, and in particular whether there is—or has been—any improper reliance on race, ethnicity, or national origin.

As you may be aware, a *60 Minutes* report that aired on May 15, 2016 highlighted the human cost of wrongful prosecution on Temple University Physics Department Chair Dr. Xiaoxing Xi, National Weather Service hydrologist Sherry Chen, and their families. Both were subjected to improper treatment by federal law enforcement and were publicly accused of spying for China before charges were dropped. These prosecutions caused them to suffer financially, professionally, and psychologically and upended their everyday lives.

These and other cases raise concerns that investigators and prosecutors may be rushing into indictments targeting of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. We are disappointed that there has still been no independent investigation or explanation regarding these cases, despite numerous requests from Members of Congress, prominent scientists and engineers, civil rights and civil liberties organizations, and the editorial boards of *The New York Times* and *The Philadelphia Inquirer*.

We support the recent request by Members of Congress urging you to lead a full and independent investigation regarding the apparent pattern and practice of minorities being singled out for arrest and indictment by federal officials. We firmly believe that otherwise innocent actions by Americans must not become suspicious simply because of the person's ethnic surname or perceived national origin. As *60 Minutes* reported, these investigations have caused a chilling effect on Asian Americans, Pacific Islanders and the scientific and academic communities. An independent investigation by you, as Inspector General, into the apparent pattern and practice of targeting Asian American and Pacific Islander scientists would help address the communities' concerns of profiling, implicit bias, and academic freedom.

Thank you for your attention to this request. If you have any questions, please contact Aarti Kohli at Asian Americans Advancing Justice-Asian Law Caucus ([aartik@advancingjustice-alc.org](mailto:aartik@advancingjustice-alc.org)).

Sincerely,

Asian Americans Advancing Justice  
National Asian Pacific American Bar Association (NAPABA)  
National Council of Asian Pacific Americans (NCAPA)  
OCA-Asian Pacific American Advocates

Anti-Defamation League  
APABA Maryland  
APABA Tampa Bay  
Arab American Institute  
Arizona Asian American Bar Association  
Asian & Pacific Islander American Health Forum  
Asian American Bar Association of Greater Chicago  
Asian American Bar Association of Ohio  
Asian American Bar Association of the Greater Bay area  
Asian American Criminal Trial Lawyers Association  
Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund (AALDEF)  
Asian American Psychological Association  
Asian Americans United  
Asian Bar Association of Sacramento  
Asian Law Alliance  
Asian Pacific American Bar Association for the Greater Washington D.C. Area (APABA-DC)  
Asian Pacific American Bar Association of Central Ohio  
Asian Pacific American Bar Association of Colorado  
Asian Pacific American Bar Association of Los Angeles County  
Asian Pacific American Bar Association of Pennsylvania (APABA-PA)  
Asian Pacific American Bar Association of Silicon Valley  
Asian Pacific American Bar Association of South Florida  
Asian Pacific American Bar Association of Virginia  
Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance, AFL-CIO (APALA)  
Asian Pacific American Women Lawyers Alliance  
Asian Pacific Environmental Network  
Asian Pacific Partners for Empowerment, Advocacy and Leadership (APPEAL)  
Bill of Rights Defense Committee/Defending Dissent Foundation  
CAAAY Organizing Asian Communities  
Center for APA Women  
Central California Asian Pacific American Bar Association

Chinese American Bar Association of Greater Chicago  
Chinese American Citizens Alliance  
Chinese for Affirmative Action  
Chinese Progressive Association  
Committee of 100  
Connecticut Asian Pacific American Bar Association  
Council on American-Islamic Relations  
Creating Law Enforcement Accountability & Responsibility project (CLEAR) at CUNY School of Law  
Japanese Americans Citizens League  
Jewish Voice for Peace  
Korean American Bar Association of Chicago  
Leadership Education for Asian Pacifics, Inc. (LEAP)  
Louisiana Asian Pacific American Bar Association  
Michigan Asian Pacific American Bar Association (MAPABA)  
Minnesota Asian Pacific American Bar Association (MNAPABA)  
Missouri Asian American Bar Association  
MPower Change  
NAACP  
NAPABA-Hawaii  
NAPAFASA  
National Filipino American Lawyers Association  
National Korean American Service and Education Consortium (NAKASEC)  
National Queer Asian Pacific Islander Alliance (NQAPIA)  
OCA-Asian Pacific American Advocates Central VA Chapter  
OCA-Asian Pacific American Advocates, Greater Seattle  
OCA-Asian Pacific American Advocates, Greater Washington D.C. Chapter  
OCA-GH  
OCA-Greater Cleveland  
OCA-New York  
OCA-Sacramento  
OCA-San Mateo  
OCA-St. Louis  
OCA-Wisconsin  
Orange County Korean American Bar Association  
Oregon Asian Pacific American Bar Association  
SABA-Chicago  
Sikh American Legal Defense and Education Fund  
South Asian Americans Leading Together (SAALT)  
South Asian Bar Association of North America  
South Asian Bar Association of Southern California (SABA-SC)  
South Asian Bar Association of Washington  
Southeast Asia Resource Action Center (SEARAC)

Southern California Chinese Lawyers Association  
Tennessee Asian Pacific American Bar Association  
Thai American Bar Association (TABAA)  
Vietnamese American Bar Association of Southern California