

Honorable Judy Chu
Chair, Asian Pacific American Congressional Caucus
2423 Rayburn HOB
Washington, DC 20515

August 22nd, 2022

Dear Judy,

As community leaders of the Asian American Community, we would like to bring your attention to a matter of grave importance to us. Your recent nomination of Assistant US Attorney Casey Arrowood to the position of US Attorney of East District of Tennessee should be withdrawn.

Mr. Arrowood was the lead prosecutor of Professor Anming Hu of University of Tennessee, a world renowned scientist in nanotechnology. Under the now defunct Trump era “China Initiative”, FBI agent Sadiku, armed only with google translation of a Chinese press release, pressured Prof. Hu to work for the FBI. When that failed, he put Prof. Hu under surveillance for a year but was unable to find any evidence of espionage. Instead, Mr. Arrowood charged him with wire fraud. Believing in his innocence, Professor Hu went to trial and the jury was not able to convict him and US District Court Judge Tom Varlan dismissed the case for lack of evidence.

Asian American is the fastest growing minority group in the United States. It helped to deliver the winning margin for Democrats in Georgia and other states. Appointment of an overzealous, ambitious prosecutor, who was eager to score a win without regard to the basic rights of an innocent Asian American loyal scientist working to better our lives and help the US maintain leadership in technology, and was persistent in ruining his reputation and finances by pursuing retrial despite inadequate evidence to convict, will be viewed as an affront to our community. In addition, Mr. Arrowood, given his track record, may turn out to be an embarrassment should he act in such careless manner in the future as your appointee.

If he is presented to the Senate for confirmation, we will rally our community to ascertain his record will be fully exposed and scrutinized in front of the Senate Judiciary Committee, the entire senate, and in public (see <https://tennesseelookout.com/2022/08/11/falsely-accused-university-of-tennessee-professor-biden-should-rescind-u-s-attorney-nomination/>). We strongly urge you to rescind his nomination.

Sincerely,

Ken Fong, Chair, Committee of 100* Northern CA (retired); CEO System Biosciences
Steven Pei, Founding Chair, United Chinese Americans
Maeley Tom, Former DNC Executive Committee Member; Member, Committee of 100*
Albert Wang, MD, Chair, API Coalition
Vincent Wang, Co-Founder, Chinese American Voter Alliance
Joel Wong, President National Asian American United; President National Asian American PAC
Dennis Wu, Founder & Chair, SFCAUSE; Member, Committee of 100*
Jeremy Wu, Co-founder, APA Justice; Member, Committee of 100*

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Honorable Ted Lieu

*For Identification Purposes Only

From the Tennessee Lookout paper: Falsely accused University of Tennessee professor: Biden should rescind U.S. Attorney nomination

BY: [JAMIE SATTERFIELD](#) - AUGUST 11, 2022 7:01 AM

A University of Tennessee professor falsely accused of being a spy is urging President Joe Biden to rescind the administration's nomination for U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of Tennessee of the man who sought to imprison him for a crime he did not commit.

"This is ridiculous," Dr. Anming Hu said of Biden's nomination of Casey Arrowood for the U.S. Attorney post in East Tennessee. "This is the worst presidential nomination ever. I am shocked at this news."

The Biden administration announced late last month the nomination of Arrowood to take over the top federal prosecutorial post in East Tennessee — even though Arrowood headed up the prosecution of Hu under a Trump era initiative Biden's Department of Justice has since scuttled as biased and flawed.

In an exclusive interview with the Tennessee Lookout this week, Hu said President Joe Biden should rescind the nomination and, if not, the U.S. Senate Committee on the Judiciary should reject Arrowood as a candidate for the post.

"My case was a case of wrongful prosecution, and I believe (if Arrowood is confirmed) similar things will happen again and will damage long term the U.S. (government's) reputation," Hu said. "If you do something wrong, you should have consequences. Instead, (Arrowood) is getting rewarded. It is very unfair. I do not think this is a reasonable nomination."

Hu is an internationally-renown nanotechnology expert who was targeted by FBI Agent Kujtim Sadiku under the Trump administration's "China Initiative," which the former president touted as an effort to rid the U.S. of Chinese spies.

Hu was the first person to be prosecuted and tried in the U.S. under that initiative.

Prosecution without proof

The "China Initiative" purported to ferret out economic Chinese spies operating in America. In practice, however, Chinese professors and researchers at American universities became the primary targets of prosecution efforts.

Hu was born in China but moved to Canada nearly two decades ago to pursue a second doctorate degree. He moved his wife, children and relatives to Canada, too, and became a naturalized citizen of that country.

His research and inventions in a welding technique known as “brazing” gained fame in academic, business and government circles, and UT recruited him to work as a professor and researcher in 2013. Testimony showed he had no ties to the Chinese government.

Armed solely with a Chinese press release translated on the fly via Google, Sadiku in 2018 falsely accused Hu of being a spy, tried to press the UT professor into spying on China for the U.S. government and, when Hu refused, spent more than a year surveilling Hu and his teenage son, trial testimony showed.

When that surveillance turned up no evidence of espionage by Hu, testimony showed, Sadiku and other federal agents convinced UT leaders to help ensnare Hu by approving his proposal for a NASA research grant — without telling Hu the project could run afoul of an obscure provision of the law that the university had repeatedly insisted did not apply to Hu or any of its professors.

Arrowood, in turn, mounted a wire fraud case against Hu so weak a jury was unable to reach a verdict and U.S. District Judge Tom Varlan ultimately tossed it out of court in 2021. After the jury deadlocked but before Varlan made his ruling, Arrowood sought to try Hu a second time and, according to court records, threatened to appeal Varlan’s dismissal.

The Biden administration announced late last month the nomination of Assistant U.S. Attorney Casey Arrowood to take over the top federal prosecutorial post in East Tennessee — even though Arrowood headed up the prosecution of University of Tennessee professor Anming Hu under a Trump era initiative Biden’s Department of Justice has since scuttled as biased and flawed.

‘I was scared’

Hu says Arrowood’s decision to prosecute him nearly brought him to professional and personal ruin. He was arrested without warning, held in jail for eight days as Arrowood tried to convince a judge Hu would flee to China, fired from his job at UT and blacklisted in his field as a potential spy.

“I heard a heavy knocking on my door,” Hu recalled of his 2020 arrest. “Sadiku and another agent were standing there. They said, ‘Oh, we’re here to arrest you for wire fraud.’ It was very early in the morning and I was still wearing my pajamas. I barely understood what wire fraud was. I did not understand why they were arresting me. They handcuffed me.

“They said, ‘We’ll bring you to the (FBI) office and explain it to you,’” Hu told the Tennessee Lookout. “I kept asking (the agents) to contact (the university) because ... my students had a midterm (scheduled).”

Once at the FBI office, the agents told Hu they could only explain the charges if he agreed to speak without a lawyer.

“I was scared,” Hu said. “I knew I needed a lawyer because this sounded very serious.”

Hu’s son, who was a student at UT at the time, and his wife, who was working in Canada at the time, had no idea he had been arrested. After local media reported his arrest, members of Hu’s church in Knoxville stepped up to help and later packed the courtroom where Arrowood was trying to convince a magistrate judge to keep him locked up pending trial.

"A Christian brother who lived very close to my house (testified)," Hu recalled. "He said I don't think Anming has done anything wrong, and he has no reason to flee. The (magistrate) judge, she saw so many people from my church who came to support me and (released him under) home detention. I had to wear an ankle monitor. I could not go out my front door. I could not even go into the garage."

Knoxville attorney Phil Lomonaco agreed to take Hu's case — without requiring any upfront money, a rarity in criminal defense work.

"Phil said, 'You did nothing wrong,'" Hu said.

After Varlan dismissed the case against Hu, UT agreed to reinstate him, and Hu has slowly been working to rebuild his career and his professional reputation. He said news of Arrowood's nomination reopened the wounds he and his family had suffered, and he felt compelled to speak out.

"Casey Arrowood, he knew my case," Hu said. "He knew something was wrong (as early as 2019) because the FBI reported to him (details) about my case. He should have exercised some control. There was no evidence. They even checked my bank accounts, found nothing.

"This case did serious damage to my reputation, my career and my family," Hu said. "It also wasted U.S. government money, taxpayer money, and wasted so much time and damaged not only me but damaged UTK's reputation and the U.S. government's reputation. This should not be rewarded. (Arrowood) should not be promoted. President Biden should review this decision. I don't think it is reasonable."