

My name is Jinliang Cai. I am from Memphis TN. I represent the Tennessee Chinese American Alliance, which is formed by concerned individuals and organizations across West, Middle, and East Tennessee.

Over the last year, the world has seen a surge in random anti-Asian hate and violence on the streets in American cities during the COVID pandemic. What they may not have seen and known is an ongoing but less visible mass investigations and unjust prosecutions of Asian American professors and scientists on university campuses by U.S. Department of Justice over the last few years under the so called “China Initiative”.

The “China Initiative” allegedly aims to combat economic espionage, but in reality, has singled out scientists and researchers of Asian and Chinese descent based on the misguided perception that their ethnicity, race, or ancestry make them prone to espionage, leading to racial profiling.

As we have heard from the opening statement, when the government fails to find evidence of economic espionage, it then opts to charge people for lesser offenses. Federal prosecutors are charging many Asian Americans and Asian immigrants with federal crimes based on administrative errors or minor offenses, such as making an error on a university form that are not normally treated as crimes.

This unfair and unjust charges have made many of us feel that we have been targeted and scapegoated based on their race, ethnicity, and national origin. It has created a chilling effect among scientists and students of Asian descent who are working and studying in academic institutions across the country. It has discouraged scientists from applying for federal grants and discouraging students from pursuing science to further their academic research. The result is an entire generation of Asian Americans and immigrants who live in fear of being subjected to a misguided scrutiny that other Americans do not face.

Surveillance and targeting of large groups of people based on race, religion or national origin is morally wrong, legally unconstitutional, and historically proven ineffective. Today, we are standing up against this injustice and violation of our civil rights. We hope and demand our justice system to fulfill its constitutional duty of equal protection under the law to Prof. Anming Hu and our scientists and researchers without prejudice and bias.