



Committee of 100



**DOMINIC NG**  
C-100 CHAIRMAN  
CHAIRMAN AND CEO  
EAST WEST BANK



**BRIAN SUN**  
C-100 MEMBER  
PARTNER, JONES DAY  
FORUM MODERATOR



**BENJAMIN WU**  
C-100 VICE CHAIR OF THE  
WASHINGTON, D.C. REGION  
VICE CHAIR  
U.S.-ASIA INSTITUTE



**ANGELICA O. TANG**  
C-100 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

## COMMITTEE OF 100 SPEAKERS FORUM BRIEF

### ASIAN AMERICANS, CITIZENSHIP, AND THE U.S. CONSTITUTION: CONTRIBUTIONS AND CONTROVERSY



In honor of Constitution Day on September 17, 2013 in Washington D.C., the Committee of 100's Speakers Forum convened a panel of legal and policy experts to examine the impact of historic Asian American court cases on interpretations of the U.S. Constitution and U.S. citizenship.

Click [here](#) to watch the full event, and follow [@Committee100](#) and [#C100Forum](#) for information on upcoming C-100 Forums.

#### SPEAKER PERSPECTIVES



#### CONGRESSWOMAN COLLEEN HANABUSA, U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES (HI-01)

Congresswoman Hanabusa discussed her and her family's personal history and the uniqueness of Hawaiian history and demographics. The Congresswoman's great-grandparents came from Japan to Hawaii and both her grandparents were placed in internment camps during World War II. The path that Asian Americans have taken has not been easy when considering the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act, restrictions on Japanese immigration, and the 1917 Asiatic Barred Zone Act as examples of legal discrimination. When you think about hardships and discrimination, you also have to think about the resiliency of people who dealt with those hardships, such as the Japanese American soldiers who served the U.S. in World War II even as their family members were living in internment camps. Hawaii's majority Asian American population and unique demographic history gives it a different perspective, but one that comes with a lot of obligation and a lot of responsibility.



#### JAMES HO, PARTNER, GIBSON DUNN & CRUTCHER

Birthright citizenship is one of the most highly charged aspects of the current immigration reform debate. While some policymakers have supported repealing birthright citizenship because they see it as a magnet for illegal immigrants, the debate over birthright citizenship is irrelevant, because of the 1898 Wong Kim Ark case. The concept of birthright citizenship was codified in the 14th Amendment, which grants citizenship to individuals born on U.S. soil who are subject to the jurisdiction of the U.S. government. Wong Kim Ark, who was born to Chinese parents in the U.S., was denied re-entry to the U.S. under the Chinese Exclusion Laws. However, the Supreme Court ruled that U.S.-born children of foreigners were protected by birthright citizenship. If repealing birthright citizenship is included in immigration reform, the Wong Kim Ark case will resurface as an important legal precedent protecting U.S.-born children of non-U.S. citizens.



**ROBERT LONG, PARTNER, COVINGTON & BURLING**

The Japanese American internment experience illustrates that even when one is recognized as a citizen, important rights can be suspended or revoked. After the attack on Pearl Harbor, an Executive Order was issued for 120,000 Japanese Americans, including 70,000 U.S. citizens, to move to relocation centers. Fred Korematsu defied this order because it violated his rights as a U.S. citizen. In the 1944 Korematsu case, the Supreme Court upheld the internment of Japanese Americans because the U.S. was at war with Japan and therefore internment was justified by military urgency. That decision continues to reverberate today, and is often considered one of the worst Supreme Court decisions ever. In 1983, the Korematsu case was overturned but the case has never been fully overruled. The lessons of Korematsu are ones we still have to absorb and confront, particularly in the post-9/11 security environment.

**PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS**



C-100 Members (bold) and Executive Director Angie Tang with Forum Speakers (L-R): **Jeremy Wu**, James Ho, **Michael Lin**, **Nancy Yuan**, Colleen Hanabusa, **Brian Sun**, Robert Long, and **Benjamin Wu**.



Legal practitioners, law students, policy analysts, and non-profit leaders attended the Forum held at the Washington law offices of Covington & Burling. Viewers joined the discussion online through Twitter and the C-100 UStream Channel.

**The Committee of 100** is a leadership organization of prominent Chinese Americans in business, government, academia, and the arts. The Committee seeks to strengthen collaboration between the United States and China and further Chinese American contributions in the U.S. through educational exchange, public diplomacy, and leadership development. For over 20 years, the Committee has served as a substantive bridge in the U.S.-China dialogue by fostering regular exchanges with the leadership of Beijing, Taipei, and Washington. Members of the Committee of 100 are leading U.S. citizens of Chinese descent who leverage their collective influence, resources and experiences to address important topics shaping U.S.-China relations as well as issues affecting the Chinese American community.

**COMMITTEE OF 100**

677 FIFTH AVE, 5TH FL | NEW YORK, NY 10022  
212-371-6565 | [WWW.COMMITTEE100.ORG](http://WWW.COMMITTEE100.ORG)



Committee of 100



@Committee100