

The Political Influence and Dynamics of Asian Politicians in the United States

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This article explores the political influence and dynamic changes of Asian politicians. This article analyzes the rise and changes of Asian politicians from historical background to modern political stage, as well as their role in shaping the political landscape of the United States. Due to their different backgrounds and experiences, this injected a new perspective into American politics and had a new impact on the political landscape of the United States. Their policy advocacy and legislative work have driven changes involving various issues in Asian communities and across the United States. The success of Asian politicians and their promotion of political events have inspired more young people in Asia to actively participate in politics, laying the foundation for achieving a more inclusive and representative political environment. Through in-depth analysis of the political influence and dynamic changes of Asian politicians, it can be found that they have contributed a unique force to the diversity and inclusiveness of American politics. However, their political participation experience still faces many difficulties.

Keywords: Asian politicians, political participation, politics

Introduction

The population of Asians in the United States has been continuously increasing from the time American political system forms. They have become an important force in American political life. Because of this, more and more Asians are paying attention to their rights in American life, and more and more Asians are willing to integrate political life into a part of their lives to ensure the rights of themselves and the entire group. Their history crosses over almost a century, from non-existent to weak, and now gradually developing into a powerful force, showing the growth and potential of this vibrant community.

The historical background is crucial for understanding the current political influence of Asian Americans. From the earliest period when Chinese and Japanese immigrants faced exclusion and discrimination, to the modern and diverse Asian community, we have observed the continuous evolution of their political participation and representation. In this process, they experienced victories and challenges, making the contribution of Asian American politicians even more important.

The rise of Asian politicians in American politics is closely related to multiple key factors. The number of Asian Americans is gradually increasing, including diverse communities from different cultures and perspectives, expanding their collective voice and political participation. In addition, the commitment to actively participate in

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political activities and community organizations has encouraged community unity, improved voter turnout rate, and inspired more people to seek public office.

In addition to their influence on number, Asian politicians have also brought unique perspectives to the country in international relations, international politics, and issues related to people's livelihoods such as ethnic diversity and inclusivity. As immigrants, their unique life experiences in the United States have influenced their policy decisions, allowing them to have a different perspective when formulating and proposing political ideas, which can effectively compensate for the deviation in perspective when formulating bills.

Despite the progress made, Asian politicians still face unique challenges and obstacles. Stereotypes and biases can still affect people's perceptions of their abilities and qualifications, highlighting the importance of eliminating these barriers. In addition, if the concerns and issues of the Asian American community are to be properly addressed, it requires continuous government promotion and active participation from people. This article aims to explore the historical development of Asian American politicians (mainly targeting Chinese Americans), analyze their practical impact on the United States and their protection of the rights of Asian people, and attempt to answer two questions: the political influence of Chinese politicians on the United States, and the dynamics of Chinese politicians in the United States.

The political participation in the United States is mainly among white Americans, and with the rise of minority rights, African Americans have also begun to play their role in politics (Leighley & Vedlitz, 1999).

However, the proportion of political participation in Chinese ethnic minorities is still relatively low. The factors that contribute to this result vary, such as the overwhelming political attitude exhibited by certain leaders in Indian immigrants. It can pose a negative impact on people's participation in community organizations (Jacob, 2006).

There are some other factors that can also affect a nation's political participation, such as socioeconomic status, education level, social environment, and so on. Among them, socioeconomic status and education level show the greatest impact on a person or group's political participation willingness (Diaz, 2012).

There is a difference in the Chinese American community; unlike others, the connection between the education level of the entire group and high-level political participation is relatively weak, such as the registration and voting of Chinese Americans (Junn, 1999).

If sufficient formal group membership is provided to encourage Asian immigrants to actively participate in politics, we should ultimately see the participation rate of all ethnic groups as Asian immigrants tend to have high levels of group consciousness.

For some historical reasons, initially, Chinese American came to the United States to exploit gold mines and achieve economic aspirations, unlike some white people who originally immigrated to the United States for their political chasing. And the Chinese were one of the first of the immigrant populations in Asia to emigrate to the U.S. in the 1880s (Kim, Linton, & Lum, 2015). So over time, once a group is labeled with this tag, it becomes difficult to assimilate into a new political environment (White et al., 2008).

At the same time, in the history of the United States, there have been many discriminatory affairs against Chinese immigrants; for such things many Chinese Americans have no awareness of participating in politics (Lien, 2001). Furthermore, the understanding and integration of Chinese Americans into the American political system is also an important factor affecting their participation in politics. Through historical review and analysis of political events, it is possible to determine the influence of Asian politicians on American politics and their dynamics.

The Dynamics of Chinese Political Participation

First Wave of Immigration

The first wave of Chinese immigration to the United States is in the mid-19th century, and mainly concentrated in the 1850s to the early 20th century. In this particular time, massive of immigrants went to the United States from China Guangdong Province, and it was called the “first wave of immigrants in China”.

The first wave of Chinese immigrants originated in Guangdong Province in southern China. At that time, because of China’s internal economic and political turmoil and natural and man-made disasters, many people at that time faced poverty and difficulties. The western development and economic prosperity of the US can provide new opportunities for these people. They wish to improve their livelihoods by finding work and life opportunities in other places, instead of their own country.

The first batch of Chinese immigrants mainly flocked to the western area of the United States, California in particular. They have acquired employment in different industries such as railway construction, gold mining, agriculture, and fisheries in the United States. Chinese laborers may be seen as cheap workers, providing assistance for railway construction, mining, and agricultural labor. But, undoubtedly, their efforts and hard work have made significant contributions to the economic development and infrastructure construction of the United States.

However, during the first wave of Chinese immigrants, they arrived in the United States only for economic pursuit or political asylum, with little awareness of political pursuit. At the same time, Chinese immigrants encounter various difficulties as well. They suffer from discrimination in lot of ways and exclusion in American society just like others do, and also from unfair treatment and poor working conditions. Additionally, the Chinese Exclusion Act passed in 1882 set limitations to the number of Chinese immigrants and prohibited Chinese workers from obtaining American citizenship, which was the first immigration act in American history that specifically targeted specific ethnic groups.

The first wave of Chinese immigrants built the historical foundation for Chinese immigrants in the United States and paved the way for subsequent waves of immigrants.

In spite of the enormous difficulties and challenges, the first Chinese generation in American played a vital role in the expansion and economic construction of the western region of the United States, laying a solid foundation for the prosperity and development of the Chinese American community in the United States today. More importantly, they have formed the foundation for future Chinese American political participation.

Chinese Exclusion Event

The Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 came into effect on May 6, 1882, and was not abolished until 1943. It was an important immigration law in American history. And it is the first time the United States has adopted clear legal measures to restrict certain race’s immigration and deprive that race of its rights in American. And this bill mainly targets labor immigrants from China, especially immigrants from Guangdong Province. Since in the mid-19th century, a large number of Chinese workers immigrated to the United States, participated in railway construction, gold mining, agriculture, fishery, and other important industries, and it turned out that they made significant contributions to the economic development of the United States, instead of the saying that these Chinese immigrants have caused many problems for society.

The main content of the Chinese Exclusion Act includes limiting the number of immigrants. This bill prohibits labor immigrants from China from entering the United States. After the elimination measures took

effect, the number of Chinese labor immigrants sharply decreased until they were finally banned.

Citizenship is prohibited. The bill also deprives Chinese workers of the right to citizenship in the United States, treating them permanently as “foreigners” and not entitled to the rights of American citizens.

In 1884, the Gielde Act further strengthened the Chinese Exclusion Act, extending the original 10-year restriction period to 20 years.

The implementation of the China Exclusion Act has sparked strong reactions from Chinese immigrants and American society. Many Chinese workers suffer from unfair treatment, discrimination, and exclusion. The existence of this bill has seriously damaged the relationship between China and the United States, and has had a long-term impact on the development of the Chinese American community.

Until the early 20th century, the impact of the Chinese Exclusion Act continued to exist. In the Asiatic Barred Zone Act passed in 1917, the United States further restricted immigrants from Asia. It was not until 1943 that the Chinese Exclusion Act was abolished under the revision of the Magnuson Act, allowing Chinese migrant workers to regain the right to enter the United States.

Although the Chinese Exclusion Act was a dark period in American history, it also inspired the unity and resistance of the Chinese American community. Under the restrictions of the Act, Chinese Americans have always adhered to their beliefs and made unrelenting efforts to strive for equal rights and interests, which ultimately laid a solid foundation for the integration and equality of Chinese Americans in the United States. At the same time, this event has roused the awareness of striving for civil rights for many learned Chinese Americans, and made them better able to defend their own rights in their following American political life.

The Rise of Chinese American Rights

Since the 1970s, the status of Asian Americans in American politics has gradually increased. More and more Asian Americans are beginning to participate in political activities, including running for public office, participating in elections, organizing political rallies, and supporting various policy initiatives. Their political participation has gradually brought substantial impact.

Asian politicians have emerged as political representatives and advocates at different levels of government. From the regional assemblies to the state and congress, the number of Asian politicians is increasing, striving for the rights and interests of the Asian community, promoting relevant legislation, and improving the political participation of Asian Americans.

There is a historic event in 2020. In the United States presidential election in 2020, Asian Americans Kamala Harris was elected as the Vice President, becoming the first Asian American and the first non-white female Vice President in American history. This marks another historic moment in the rise of Asian political power in the United States.

Asian American political participation in the United States includes many aspects, such as local politics and community participation: Asian American participation in local politics is gradually increasing. Many Asian communities are organized at the urban and regional levels to participate in community issues and policy formulation. This grassroots participation enhances the voice of the Asian community and enables them to have a more direct impact on local policies and projects.

The number of Asian Political organisation and groups is also increasing. These organizations are committed to fighting for the rights of Asian Americans, increasing political participation, and promoting laws against

discrimination and exclusion against Asian communities. Some organizations also provide training and resources to help Asian Americans enter the political field.

The participation rate of Asian Americans in elections is gradually increasing. More and more Asian voters are registering and voting, becoming an important group in determining election results. Political candidates are increasingly valuing the opinions of Asian voters and actively seeking their support.

In addition to Chinese Americans, the political representatives of other Asian groups are also gradually increasing. Politicians from Asian communities such as Korean, Filipino, and Indian have emerged at different levels of government, representing the interests of different Asian communities.

Asian politicians and organizations play an active role in promoting social issues related to the Asian community. These issues include immigration policy reform, equal educational opportunities, healthcare, anti-hate laws, and anti-discrimination laws.

With the growth of the Asian community in the United States and the improvement of political awareness, their position and representation in the political field will continue to expand, making important contributions to achieving a more diverse, inclusive, and representative political landscape in the United States.

The Political Influence of Asian Politicians

In recent years, the Asian community has suffered from increasing hatred and violent attacks in the United States. Some Asian politicians actively come forward to condemn this discriminatory behavior and promote more measures to address hate crimes. Their advocacy provides positive guidance for society in combating hate behavior.

Some Asian politicians play an important role in US relations with China and Asia Pacific policy. Their views on handling US China relations, the Taiwan Strait issue, the North Korean nuclear issue, and Southeast Asian affairs have influenced the US foreign policy orientation.

Asian politicians strive to gain the support of more Asian voters and provide them with political education. They hope to stimulate the participation of more Asian voters and help them understand the importance of political processes and voting rights.

Some Asian politicians have demonstrated a spirit of cross party cooperation, not only working together on their own ethnic issues, but also collaborating with other ethnic and political parties to seek common solutions to problems.

The rise of Asian politicians on the political stage also reflects the development and growth of Asian communities in the United States. They represent a diverse and vast community, promoting the political system to better reflect the diversity of the American population.

Examples of Political Influence

Grace Meng, a member of the United States House of Representatives and a Chinese American, once promoted the adoption of legislation against Asian hatred in Congress.

Since the outbreak of COVID-19 in 2020, the virus has spread rapidly around the world, and the United States has also been seriously affected. In the early stages of the epidemic, some people mistakenly linked Asian Americans with the Asian community, linking them with the spread of the virus, leading to a surge in hate crimes and discrimination against Asians throughout the United States. As a member of the Asian American community, Meng Enhui, a member of the United States House of Representatives, made an active speech to promote the

adoption of the COVID-19 Hatred Crime Act. The bill aims to strengthen the protection of Asian communities by establishing a federal agency to collect and record hate crime data related to COVID-19, so as to deal with discrimination and attacks against Asians by other races.

She called on people to eliminate discrimination and hatred against Asians through speeches and shouts in parliament. At the same time, it also emphasized the contributions and contributions of Asian Americans in American history, and demanded that the government take effective protective measures to protect the Asian community from the threat of fear and violence.

On May 20, 2021, the United States Congress passed the COVID-19 Asian Discrimination Act, which President Biden subsequently signed into law. This legislation not only reflects Grace Meng's political leadership, but also highlights the US government's concern and protection for the Asian community.

And Judy Chu, a member of the United States House of Representatives and a Chinese Americans, made efforts to promote the Dream and Promise Act.

The Dream and Promise Act is aimed at providing some illegal immigrants who want to enter the United States with legal means to have the opportunity to enter and truly stay in the United States. At the same time, the bill also aims to protect millions of temporary protected status (TPS) immigrants who have passively fled their country due to war, disaster, or other reasons and obtained temporary residency in the United States.

Judy Chu is one of the main initiators and supporters of the Dream and Promise Act. As a Chinese Americans, she advocated the passage of this bill in the Congress, and committed to promoting immigration reform in the House of Representatives to provide more opportunities and guarantees for illegal immigrants and immigrants with temporary protection status. She has repeatedly delivered speeches to Congress, expressing support for dreamers and immigrants with temporary protection status, and condemning some other politicians' attempts to deprive these immigrants of their legal residency rights. She believes that these immigrants should obtain legal citizenship and qualifications because they have made contributions to the country and should enjoy equal rights and opportunities.

In 2021, with the firm support of Steven Chu and other Asian politicians, the United States House of Representatives passed the Dream and Commitment Act. This is only a minor success of the bill, which still needs further signature by the Senate and the President before it can become law.

The cases of Judy Chu and Grace Meng both demonstrate the positive role of Asian politicians in fighting for minority and immigrant rights. They have strived for equal rights for dreamers and temporary protected immigrants through legislation and political actions, promoted the inclusion and protection of ethnic minorities by the US government, made important contributions to social justice and equal rights, reflected the active participation and advocacy of Asian politicians in American politics, and provided important examples for opposing hatred and discrimination. These political actions have brought the United States' anti-discrimination activities to a new stage and taken a step towards becoming a more just and inclusive society. At the same time, this also reflects that Asian politicians can truly play their role in American politics.

Conclusion

After a long period of efforts and strugglings by the Chinese American community in the United States, they have gone from the process of not participating in politics to actively striving for their political rights. Nowadays, more and more Chinese people are actively voting and participating in elections, becoming an indispensable force in the US political situation. They play an important role in their political positions, fighting for the rights of

more Chinese Americans, protecting their democratic and survival rights, and eliminating racial discrimination. However, this does not mean that Chinese politicians can have an overwhelming influence on American politics, and there are still many difficulties to be addressed on the path of political rights.

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