

CALDA Files Federal Lawsuit to Block Texas' SB 17 — A New Land Ban Alleged to Target Chinese Americans

Lawsuit seeks to strike down SB 17, citing historic parallels to exclusionary land laws from the 1890s

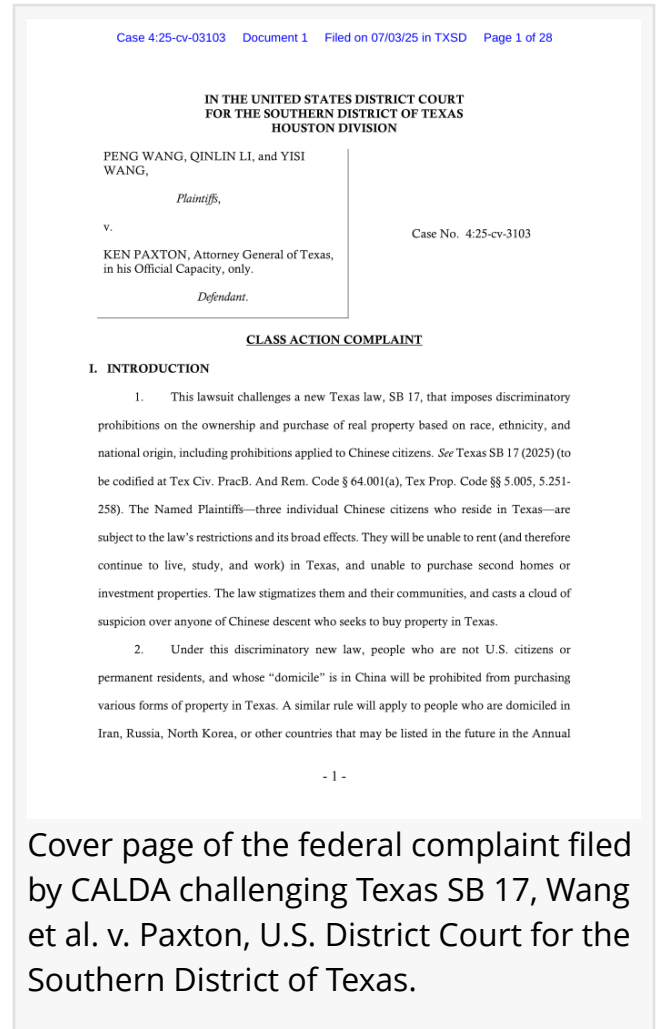
HOUSTON, TX, UNITED STATES, July 3, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The Chinese American Legal Defense Alliance ([CALDA](#)), a non-profit organization dedicated to the fight against racial discrimination, filed a federal lawsuit ([Wang et al. v. Paxton, Case No. 4:25-cv-3103](#)) today in Houston to challenge Texas' new alien land law, also known as [SB 17](#).

Governor Greg Abbott signed SB 17 into law on June 20, 2025, with an effective date of September 1, 2025. In the name of national security, the law severely restricts individuals and companies from China, Iran, North Korea, and Russia from purchasing or leasing real estate in Texas.

Under SB 17, Chinese citizens without green cards — including people with valid work, student, visiting scholar, or business visitor visas or waiting for asylum — will be banned from purchasing any real estate in Texas except for a single homestead property. The law bans all leases except the ones with a term shorter than one year. Violations carry severe penalties, including forced property sales, substantial fines, and felony charges.

According to the lawsuit, SB 17 follows Texas's history of alien land laws dating back to the 1890s — laws that were ultimately struck down or repealed after World War II. More than a century later, the lawsuit argues that Texas lawmakers have enacted policies reminiscent of the Chinese Exclusion Acts.

Texas is not alone. Florida passed its alien land law in 2023, similarly restricting the ability of



Cover page of the federal complaint filed by CALDA challenging Texas SB 17, Wang et al. v. Paxton, U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Texas.

Chinese Americans to buy or own real estate in the state. CALDA has also filed a legal challenge (Case No. 4:23-cv-208-AW-MAF), which is now pending before the court of appeals. States including Indiana, Nebraska, Virginia, Utah, Ohio, Michigan, and North Carolina have passed or are considering copycat bills. As of 2025, hundreds of such legislative proposals have surfaced nationwide.

CALDA's lawsuit represents three Chinese Americans — two with student visas and one with work visa — in a proposed class action seeking to strike down SB 17. The plaintiffs face severe barriers to renting or purchasing properties under the new law. The complaint alleges multiple constitutional violations, including Equal Protection, Due Process, and Federal Preemption. It asks the court to declare SB 17 unconstitutional and void.

"We are standing up not only for these three plaintiffs, but for every Chinese American who deserves equal protection and basic dignity in the United States." said Justin Sadowsky, Legal Director for CALDA and the lead counsel on the case.

About CALDA

The Chinese American Legal Defense Alliance (CALDA) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that advocates for the civil rights and equal protection of Chinese Americans through strategic litigation, community education, and policy advocacy.

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Stop anti-Asian hate and protect Chinese American communities.



Legal fight over Texas SB 17's discriminatory land restrictions.



This discriminatory law
violates fundamental
constitutional principles and
perpetuates harmful
stereotypes that have no
place in modern America."

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