

To the Leadership of the American Political Science Association,

As political scientists, our scholarship often interrogates the interplay between policy, politics, and their real-world impacts. It is in this spirit that I write to express profound concern regarding APSA's upcoming annual conference in Vancouver, Canada. It pains me to write this, as Vancouver was my home for many years and I welcome any opportunity to be back in that beautiful city. But we find ourselves at a moment when recent immigration policies have created considerable uncertainty for our colleagues, including naturalized citizens and lawful permanent residents.

The issue at stake is not merely logistical—it directly implicates core values of fairness, scholarly community, and professional accountability. By holding a major professional gathering outside the United States, APSA unintentionally places scholars, students, and practitioners affiliated with American institutions in a deeply vulnerable position. Departure from the United States, even briefly, has become fraught with significant risk. Colleagues holding H-1B, F-1, J-1, or other non-citizen statuses face the genuine possibility of denial of reentry due to arbitrary enforcement or sudden shifts in immigration policy.

Recent incidents underscore these concerns. According to news reports, a German citizen and U.S. legal permanent resident was detained and allegedly mistreated by Customs and Border Protection agents at Boston Logan International Airport due to past minor offenses. Cases like this highlight the unpredictable and often harsh enforcement actions that can affect even those with established legal status.

The risks extend even beyond those residing within the United States. Recently, a French scientist traveling as a tourist to attend an academic conference was allegedly denied entry by Customs and Border Protection agents, reportedly due to messages found on his phone criticizing President Trump's cuts to science funding. This incident highlights the unpredictable and politically fraught environment that scholars navigating international borders now face, underscoring the severity and breadth of the risks involved.

Moreover, there has been an increased focus on denaturalization efforts. Reports indicate that the Department of Justice has ramped up denaturalization cases, targeting individuals who may have committed minor infractions or discrepancies in their applications. This trend raises alarms about the security of citizenship status for naturalized individuals.

We must recognize that these risks are not abstract. They carry potentially life and career-altering consequences: possible detention, disruption to ongoing research, separation from family, and professional isolation. APSA's stated commitments must translate into meaningful actions that recognize and actively mitigate the practical risks and challenges faced by our scholarly community.

Of course, many international scholars are likely thrilled the conference is not held in the United States this year, for understandable reasons. But since only about a fifth of the membership of

APSA is international scholars, this issue remains an urgent one for the vast majority of conference participants.

I urge APSA to publicly acknowledge and proactively address the potential dangers faced by our colleagues. Offering robust support mechanisms, clear guidance, and alternative forms of participation is not merely advisable—it is imperative.

Respectfully,

Dominik Stecula
The Ohio State University