March 4, 2016

Dear SCBA Members,

Attached please find a formal letter sent to the United States Attorney General, Ms. Loretta E. Lynch, on behalf of the SCBA Council, expressing our concerns over a series of recent recanted indictments of Chinese American scientists, including those of Dr. Sherry Chen of the National Weather Service and Dr. Xiaoxing Xi of the Temple University.

You can also read about the general comments from the scientific community, published in Science, 13 November 2015, vol. 350, pages 732-735.

http://science.sciencemag.org/content/350/6262/732

Please address your comments to the SCBA Co-Executive Directors via email, SCBA2U@scbasociety.org.

Sincerely yours,

Yang Shi, Ph.D.
SCBA President 2016-2017
February 29, 2016

The Honorable Loretta E. Lynch
Attorney General
United States Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20530-0001

Dear Attorney General,

We, the Society of Chinese Bioscientists in America (SCBA), are writing to express our concerns regarding the recently recanted indictments of espionage of two Chinese American scientists, Dr. Sherry Chen of the National Weather Service and Dr. Xiaoxing Xi of Temple University.

As proud and patriotic American citizens of Chinese descent, we are as concerned about espionage threats from foreign countries as American citizens of other ethnic origins, and we strongly support the effort by the government to investigate such threats. The Chen and Xi cases, together with a number of other cases in recent years, however, suggest an apparently alarming pattern of profiling Chinese-American scientists based on their ethnic origin and of biased and subjective judgments on the part of both federal investigators and prosecutors. Such a pattern, if it indeed had occurred, would be in violation of equal protection rights of lawful citizens of the United States.

The SCBA is a non-profit organization, which represents over 2,500 members including distinguished and eminent scientists in biomedical disciplines in many universities, research institutions, and biopharmaceutical companies in the United States and Canada. One of the missions of the SCBA is to improve and enhance professional and career development of its members. SCBA members have genuine interests in issues raised by the Chen and Xi cases.

We therefore respectfully request that the Department of Justice authorize an independent investigation to determine if fact-finding procedures were properly followed and executed by both federal investigators and prosecutors in the Chen and Xi cases, and in particular if race, ethnicity or the national origin of Drs. Chen and Xi played any role in their arrests and indictments. We further urge the Department of Justice to establish appropriate oversight mechanisms for federal investigators and prosecutors in such cases to prevent adverse actions on innocent and lawful citizens from occurring again in the future.

Sincerely yours,

The SCBA

PS. The opinions expressed in this letter are solely those of SCBA members and do not reflect in any way the position of their affiliated institutions.