



ONE HUNDRED SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS
SENATOR JEFF MERKLEY, CHAIRMAN
REPRESENTATIVE JAMES P. MCGOVERN, COCHAIRMAN

May 18, 2022

The Honorable Chris Murphy
Chair
Subcommittee on Homeland Security
Senate Committee on Appropriations
136 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Shelley Moore Capito
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Homeland Security
Senate Committee on Appropriations
172 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Lucille Roybal-Allard
Chair
Subcommittee on Homeland Security
House Committee on Appropriations
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Chuck Fleischmann
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Homeland Security
House Committee on Appropriations
2410 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chair Murphy, Ranking Member Capito, Chair Roybal-Allard, and Ranking Member Fleischmann:

As you develop the fiscal year (FY) 2023 appropriations bill for the Department of Homeland Security, we respectfully ask that you fully fund the request in the U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) budget to enforce the *Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act* (P.L. 117-78). The CBP budget includes \$70,309,000 to add enforcement personnel, technological capability, training, and other activities necessary to faithfully implement the law. We strongly support this request given the critical need to support compliance with this new law, protect U.S. consumers from products tainted by forced labor, and reduce unintended adverse impacts on supply chains.

In light of the high prevalence of forced labor in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (XUAR) and in coercive labor transfer programs elsewhere in China, the *Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act*, signed into law on December 23, 2021, presumptively bans the import of any goods, wares, articles, and merchandise mined, produced, or manufactured wholly or in part in the XUAR or by certain entities that are engaged in labor transfer programs. The legislation also sets out a process for the Forced Labor Enforcement Task Force, led by the Department of Homeland Security, to devise and implement a strategy to prevent such goods made from forced labor from entering the United States, including a process by which importers can provide evidence that XUAR-connected products were not made with forced labor.

The FY 2022 omnibus appropriations bill provided \$27,495,000 to facilitate compliance with these requirements. That appropriation appropriately reflected the urgency of increasing U.S. Government resources to crack down on the import of products of forced labor and the overwhelming bipartisan support to do so. With enforcement burdens set to increase following the implementation of the aforementioned import prohibition, to be implemented 180 days from enactment of the *Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act*, the additional funding requested by CBP will support compliance by addressing staffing, technological, and administrative shortfalls. CBP estimates that enforcing this prohibition would substantially increase the number of transactions subject to review and enforcement from less than one million to more than 11.5 million per year. This request would support hiring 300 additional positions as well as increasing capacity for technology, training, strategy, and outreach.

We championed the *Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act* because of the appalling evidence of widespread forced labor in the XUAR, as well as elsewhere in China via coercive labor transfers, and our conviction that U.S. consumers should never be unwittingly complicit in supporting slavery. Enactment of this law sent a resounding signal of the U.S. commitment to address the activities that fund genocide, protect U.S. consumers, and defend human rights. Fully funding the CBP request will support the bipartisan, bicameral vision of the U.S. Congress.

We thank you for your consideration of our request.

Sincerely,



Senator Jeffrey A. Merkley
Chairman



Representative James P. McGovern
Cochair



Senator Marco Rubio
Ranking Member



Representative Christopher H. Smith
Ranking Member