



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

March 28, 2022

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Room S-221, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
Room H-305, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Minority Leader
United States Senate
Room S-230, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Room H-204, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Majority Leader Schumer, Speaker Pelosi, Minority Leader McConnell, and Minority Leader McCarthy:

We strongly support bipartisan efforts over the past several years to address challenges posed by the People's Republic of China (PRC) to American workers, supply chains, and international standards, including those relating to human rights. As Chairs of the Congressional-Executive Commission on China, we have worked on a bipartisan basis to advance legislation pursuing human rights improvements in the PRC as a critical national interest. As Members of both bodies work to reconcile the Senate-passed U.S. Innovation and Competition Act (USICA) and the House-passed America COMPETES Act, we urge you to include language and policy proposals that reflect the Commission's recommendations as cited below.

Human rights are at the core of our relationship with China, both as a reflection of American principles and as a commitment to help the people of the PRC in their aspiration for fundamental rights and freedoms. We believe the final bill must include robust provisions on human rights principles, which is necessary to help us compete against the rising tide of authoritarianism globally. We ask that you maintain robust language and policy initiatives signaling that the protection and advance of democratic freedoms, human rights and the rule of law cannot be unshackled from economic cooperation and security interests. The PRC's vast definition of national security, export of mass surveillance technologies, efforts to censor a free press and religious freedom, and efforts to redefine the global world order require the integration of human rights obligations and the protection of global governance standards into U.S. national security strategies.

During the past several years, the Commission has held hearings and included in our Annual Reports a section detailing the PRC's malign influence operations and propaganda efforts, both in the United States and globally. Given that the PRC has expanded such operations in recent years and engages in transnational repression targeting activists, academics and individuals critical of the PRC's policies, we urge conferees to maintain sections of the bills addressing the PRC actions in these areas, including those sections pertaining to the PRC's economic coercion efforts that have a negative impact on human rights, such as efforts to stifle freedom of expression and efforts to extend predatory economic development loans along its Belt and Road Initiative.

We particularly draw your attention to sections that reflect Commission recommendations and urge you to retain them in the final bill, including:

- Creation of expanded immigration pathways for Hong Kong residents and Uyghurs to protect those fleeing PRC persecution (Sec. 30303 and Sec. 30306 of COMPETES);
- Creation of the "China Censorship Monitor and Action Group" to protect U.S. businesses and individuals from PRC censorship and intimidation (Sec. 30324 of COMPETES, Sec. 3141 of USICA);
- Extension of the ban on export of covered munitions items to the Hong Kong police (Sec. 30304 of COMPETES);
- Sanctions on individuals complicit in forced sterilizations and forced abortions targeting primarily Turkic Muslims in Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (Sec. 30318 of COMPETES, Sec. 3303 of USICA);
- Authorizations of funding to protect Hong Kong's democratic freedoms (Sec. 30302 of COMPETES, Sec. 3301 of USICA) and to protect press and internet freedom in Hong Kong (Sec. 30310 of COMPETES, Sec. 3309 of USICA);
- Authorizations of funding to support independent media and combat PRC disinformation, inside and outside of the PRC, and invest in technology to subvert internet censorship and support the training and protection of journalists (Sec. 30219A of COMPETES, Sec. 3136 of USICA);
- Authorization of funding to advance freedoms of association, assembly, religion, and expression for women, human rights activists, and ethnic and religious minorities in the PRC (Sec. 30311 of COMPETES, Sec. 3311 of USICA);
- Expansion of Mandarin language training in U.S. schools and colleges through authorization of funds to support the Liu Xiaobo Fund for the Study of Chinese Language and alternatives to Chinese government-funded Confucius Institutes and Confucius Classrooms (Sec. 30219F of COMPETES);
- Restoration of the Fulbright exchange program with China and Hong Kong (Sec. 30219 of COMPETES, Sec. 3134 of USICA);

- Reporting on export control lists to ensure that items are included that would provide China with a critical capability for surveillance or repression (Sec. 30316 of COMPETES);
- Ensuring proper rank of the Special Coordinator for Tibetan Issues and establishment of a Tibet Unit at the U.S. Embassy in Beijing (Sec. 30308 of COMPETES, Sec. 3306 of USICA) and reaffirming the policy any interference from the PRC in the process of recognizing a successor reincarnation of the Dalai Lama is a clear abuse of the rights of religious freedom of Tibetan Buddhists and people (Sec. 30309 of COMPETES, Sec. 3307 of USICA);
- Reporting on efforts by the PRC to undermine global governance and its influence in international organizations (Sec. 3207 of USICA); and
- Establishing an annual review on the presence of Chinese companies in United States capital markets to help identify companies that have knowingly and materially contributed to activities that undermine U.S. national security, serious human rights abuses or increased financial risk exposure for U.S. investors (Sec. 3407 of USICA).

Thank you for considering our requests. Our values and interests cannot be separated when it comes to the challenges posed by the PRC to international standards, global governance, and universal human rights.

Sincerely,



Senator Jeffrey A. Merkley
Chairman



Representative James P. McGovern
Cochair