

118TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 2766

To support the human rights of Uyghurs and members of other minority groups residing primarily in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region and safeguard their distinct identity, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APRIL 20, 2023

Mrs. KIM of California (for herself, Mr. BERA, Mrs. RADEWAGEN, Mr. SHERMAN, Mr. HILL, Ms. TENNEY, Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio, Mr. PHILLIPS, Mr. FITZPATRICK, Mr. PETERS, Ms. TITUS, Ms. NORTON, Mr. ARMSTRONG, Mr. KEATING, Mr. COSTA, Ms. WILD, Ms. TOKUDA, and Ms. WEXTON) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

A BILL

To support the human rights of Uyghurs and members of other minority groups residing primarily in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region and safeguard their distinct identity, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Uyghur Policy Act of
5 2023”.

1 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

2 Congress finds the following:

3 (1) The People's Republic of China (PRC) con-
4 tinues to repress the distinct Islamic, Turkic identity
5 of Uyghurs and members of other minority groups
6 of the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region
7 (XUAR) in northwestern China and other areas of
8 their habitual residence.

9 (2) Uyghurs, and other predominantly Muslim
10 ethnic minorities historically making up the majority
11 of the XUAR population, have maintained through-
12 out their history a distinct religious and cultural
13 identity.

14 (3) Human rights, including freedom of religion
15 or belief, and respect for the Uyghurs' unique Mus-
16 lim identity are legitimate interests of the inter-
17 national community.

18 (4) The People's Republic of China has ratified
19 the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and
20 Cultural Rights and is thereby bound by its provi-
21 sions. The PRC has also signed the International
22 Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. Article One
23 of both covenants state that all peoples have the
24 right to self-determination.

25 (5) An official campaign to encourage Han Chi-
26 nese migration into the XUAR has placed immense

1 pressure on those who seek to preserve the ethnic,
2 cultural, religious, and linguistic traditions of the
3 Uyghur people. Chinese authorities have supported
4 an influx of Han Chinese economic immigrants into
5 the XUAR, implemented discrimination against
6 Uyghurs in hiring practices, and provided unequal
7 access to healthcare services.

8 (6) The authorities of the People’s Republic of
9 China have manipulated the strategic objectives of
10 the international war on terror to mask their in-
11 creasing cultural and religious oppression of the
12 Muslim population residing in the XUAR.

13 (7) Following unrest in the region, in 2014,
14 Chinese authorities launched their “Strike Hard
15 against Violent Extremism” campaign, in which du-
16 bious allegations of widespread extremist activity
17 were used as justification for gross human rights
18 violations committed against members of the Uyghur
19 community in the XUAR.

20 (8) PRC authorities have made use of the legal
21 system as a tool of repression, including for the im-
22 position of arbitrary detentions and for torture
23 against members of the Uyghur community and
24 other populations.

1 (9) Uyghurs and Kazakhs who have secured
2 citizenship or permanent residency outside of the
3 PRC have attested to repeated threats, harassment,
4 and surveillance by PRC officials.

5 (10) Reporting from international news organi-
6 zations has found that over the past decade, family
7 members of Uyghurs living outside of the PRC have
8 gone missing or been detained to force Uyghur expa-
9 triates to return to the PRC or silence their dissent.

10 (11) Credible evidence from human rights orga-
11 nizations, think tanks, and journalists confirms that
12 more than 1,000,000 Uyghurs and members of other
13 Muslim ethnic minority groups have been imprisoned
14 in “political reeducation” centers.

15 (12) Independent accounts from former detain-
16 ees of “political reeducation” centers describe inhu-
17 mane conditions and treatment including forced po-
18 litical indoctrination, torture, beatings, rape, forced
19 sterilization, and food deprivation. Former detainees
20 also confirmed that they were told by guards the
21 only way to secure release was to demonstrate suffi-
22 cient political loyalty to the PRC Government and
23 the Chinese Communist Party.

24 (13) Popular discourse surrounding the ongoing
25 atrocities in the XUAR and advocacy efforts to as-

1 sist Uyghurs remains muted in most Muslim major-
2 ity nations around the world.

3 (14) Both Secretary of State Antony Blinken
4 and Former Secretary of State Michael Pompeo
5 have stated that the PRC Government has com-
6 mitted genocide and crimes against humanity
7 against Uyghurs and other ethnic and religious mi-
8 norities in the XUAR.

9 (15) Government bodies of multiple nations
10 have also declared that PRC Government atrocities
11 against such populations in the XUAR constitute
12 genocide, including the parliaments of the United
13 Kingdom, Belgium, Czechia, Lithuania, the Nether-
14 lands, and Canada.

15 **SEC. 3. DECLARATIONS OF POLICY.**

16 Congress—

17 (1) calls upon the Government of the People’s
18 Republic of China to open the XUAR to regular,
19 transparent, and unmanipulated visits by members
20 of the press, Members of Congress, congressional
21 staff delegations, the United States Special Coordi-
22 nator for Uyghur Issues under section 4, and mem-
23 bers and staff of the Congressional-Executive Com-
24 mission on the People’s Republic of China;

1 (2) calls upon the Government of the People's
2 Republic of China to recognize, and seek to ensure
3 the preservation of, the distinct ethnic, cultural, reli-
4 gious, and linguistic identity of Uyghurs and mem-
5 bers of other ethnic and religious minority groups in
6 the XUAR;

7 (3) calls upon the Government of the People's
8 Republic of China to cease all government-sponsored
9 crackdowns, imprisonments, and detentions of people
10 throughout the XUAR aimed at those involved in
11 the peaceful expression of their ethnic, cultural, po-
12 litical, or religious identity;

13 (4) commends countries that have provided
14 shelter and hospitality to Uyghurs in exile, including
15 Turkey, Albania, and Germany; and

16 (5) urges countries with sizeable Muslim popu-
17 lations, given commonalities in their religious and
18 cultural identities, to demonstrate concern over the
19 plight of Uyghurs.

20 **SEC. 4. UNITED STATES SPECIAL COORDINATOR FOR**
21 **UYGHUR ISSUES.**

22 (a) IN GENERAL.—There is authorized to be within
23 the Department of State a United States Special Coordi-
24 nator for Uyghur Issues (in this section referred to as the

1 “Special Coordinator”), to be designated by the Secretary
2 of State in accordance with subsection (b).

3 (b) CONSULTATION.—The Secretary of State shall
4 consult with the Chairs and Ranking Members of the
5 Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate and the
6 Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representa-
7 tives prior to the designation of the Special Coordinator.

8 (c) CENTRAL OBJECTIVE.—The Special Coordinator
9 should seek to promote the protection and preservation of
10 the distinct ethnic, cultural, religious, and linguistic iden-
11 tities of the Uyghurs.

12 (d) DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES.—The Special
13 Coordinator should, as appropriate—

14 (1) coordinate United States Government poli-
15 cies, programs, and projects concerning the
16 Uyghurs;

17 (2) vigorously promote the policy of seeking to
18 protect the distinct ethnic, religious, cultural, and
19 linguistic identity of the Uyghurs and seek improved
20 respect for human rights in the Xinjiang Uyghur
21 Autonomous Region (XUAR);

22 (3) maintain close contact with Uyghur reli-
23 gious, cultural, and political leaders, including seek-
24 ing regular travel to the XUAR and to Uyghur pop-

1 ulations in Central Asia, Turkey, Albania, Germany,
2 and other parts of Europe;

3 (4) lead coordination efforts for the release of
4 political prisoners in the XUAR who are being de-
5 tained for exercising their human rights;

6 (5) consult with the United States Congress on
7 policies relevant to the XUAR and the Uyghurs;

8 (6) coordinate with relevant Federal agencies to
9 administer aid to Uyghur rights advocates; and

10 (7) make efforts to establish contacts with for-
11 eign ministries of other countries, especially in Eu-
12 rope, Central Asia, and members of the Organisation
13 of Islamic Cooperation, to pursue a policy of pro-
14 moting greater respect for human rights and reli-
15 gious freedom for Uyghurs and other ethnic and re-
16 ligious minority groups persecuted in the PRC.

17 (e) SUPPORT.—The Secretary of State shall ensure
18 the Special Coordinator has adequate resources, staff, and
19 administrative support to carry out this section.

20 (f) DEADLINE.—If the Secretary of State has not
21 designated the Special Coordinator by the date that is 180
22 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Sec-
23 retary shall submit to the Committee on Foreign Affairs
24 of the House of Representatives and the Committee on

1 Foreign Relations of the Senate a report detailing the rea-
2 sons for the delay.

3 (g) TERMINATION.—This section shall terminate on
4 the date that is five years after the designation of the Spe-
5 cial Coordinator.

6 **SEC. 5. PUBLIC DIPLOMACY IN THE ISLAMIC WORLD ON**
7 **THE UYGHUR SITUATION.**

8 (a) FUNDING FOR HUMAN RIGHTS ADVOCATES.—Of
9 the amounts authorized to be appropriated for the U.S.
10 Speaker Program in the Bureau of Educational and Cul-
11 tural Affairs of the Department of State, \$250,000 for
12 each of fiscal years 2024, 2025, and 2026 is authorized
13 to be available for human rights advocates on behalf of
14 the Uyghurs and members of other ethnic and religious
15 minority groups persecuted in the PRC, whose names may
16 be provided by the Department of State and the United
17 States Special Coordinator for Uyghur Issues in consulta-
18 tion with representatives of the global Uyghur community,
19 to speak at public diplomacy forums in Organisation of
20 Islamic Cooperation countries and other regions on issues
21 regarding the human rights and religious freedom of
22 Uyghurs and members of other ethnic and religious minor-
23 ity groups persecuted in the PRC.

24 (b) UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR GLOBAL MEDIA.—
25 It is the sense of Congress that the United States Agency

1 for Global Media should facilitate the unhindered dissemi-
2 nation of information to Organisation of Islamic Coopera-
3 tion countries on issues regarding the human rights and
4 religious freedom of Uyghurs and members of other mi-
5 nority groups in the XUAR.

6 **SEC. 6. ACCESS TO DETENTION FACILITIES AND PRISONS**
7 **AND THE RELEASE OF PRISONERS.**

8 (a) SENSE OF CONGRESS ON POLITICAL REEDUCA-
9 TION AND DETENTION FACILITIES.—It is the sense of
10 Congress that the United States Government should, in
11 cooperation with other like-minded countries, develop a
12 strategy to—

13 (1) pressure the People’s Republic of China to
14 immediately close all detention facilities and “polit-
15 ical reeducation” camps housing Uyghurs and mem-
16 bers of other ethnic minority groups in the Xinjiang
17 Uyghur Autonomous Region (XUAR); and

18 (2) support the United Nations Commissioner
19 for Human Rights and numerous United Nations
20 Special Rapporteurs’ urgent calls for immediate and
21 unhindered access to detention facilities and “polit-
22 ical reeducation” camps in the XUAR by inde-
23 pendent international organizations and the Office of
24 the United Nations High Commissioner for Human

1 Rights for a comprehensive assessment of the
2 human rights situation.

3 (b) SENSE OF CONGRESS ON PRISON ACCESS AND
4 PRISONER RELEASE.—It is the sense of Congress that the
5 President and Secretary of State, in meetings with rep-
6 resentatives of the Government of the People’s Republic
7 of China, should—

8 (1) request the immediate and unconditional re-
9 lease of all prisoners detained for their ethnic, cul-
10 tural, religious, and linguistic identities, or for ex-
11 pressing their political or religious beliefs in the
12 XUAR;

13 (2) seek access for international humanitarian
14 organizations, including the International Federation
15 of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, to pris-
16 oners in the XUAR to ensure such prisoners are not
17 being mistreated and are receiving necessary medical
18 care; and

19 (3) seek the immediate release of all prisoners
20 who have been arbitrarily detained and sentenced
21 without due process, including Ekpar Asat, who par-
22 ticipated in the Department of State’s International
23 Visitors Leadership Program in 2016, was incarcerated
24 after returning to the XUAR, and is now serv-

1 ing a 15 year prison sentence on charges of “inciting
2 ethnic hatred and ethnic discrimination”.

3 **SEC. 7. REQUIREMENT FOR UYGHUR LANGUAGE TRAINING.**

4 The Secretary of State shall ensure that Uyghur lan-
5 guage training is available to Foreign Service officers as
6 appropriate, and that every effort is made to ensure that
7 a Uyghur-speaking member of the Foreign Service (as
8 such term is described in section 103 of the Foreign Serv-
9 ice Act of 1980 (22 U.S.C. 3903)) is assigned to United
10 States diplomatic and consular missions in China.

11 **SEC. 8. UYGHUR CONSIDERATIONS AT THE UNITED NA-**
12 **TIONS.**

13 It is the sense of Congress that—

14 (1) the United States Government should op-
15 pose any efforts to prevent consideration of the
16 issues related to the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous
17 Region (XUAR) in any body of the United Nations;

18 (2) the United States Government should op-
19 pose any efforts to prevent the participation of any
20 Uyghur human rights advocates in nongovernmental
21 fora hosted by or otherwise organized under the aus-
22 pices of any body of the United Nations; and

23 (3) the Secretary of State should instruct the
24 United States Permanent Representative to the
25 United Nations to support the appointment of a spe-

1 cial rapporteur or working group for the XUAR for
2 the purposes of monitoring human rights violations
3 and abuses in the XUAR, and for making reports
4 available to the High Commissioner for Refugees,
5 the High Commissioner for Human Rights, the
6 Human Rights Commission, the General Assembly,
7 and other United Nations bodies.

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