



TIBET LOBBY DAY 2019

Tibetan-Americans and friends of Tibet call on the US Congress to continue its leadership in supporting the aspirations for the Tibetan people to a better future, and are thankful for its decades-long commitment to providing programmatic and political support for Tibetans both in Tibet, and in exile. While Congress should oppose China's oppressive policies in Tibet and support the broader goal of a negotiated agreement on Tibet through dialogue between China and the Dalai Lama or his representatives, it can take concrete actions:

THE ASKS

1. **SIGN ON LETTER TO SECRETARY POMPEO: EXPRESSING DEEP CONCERN ABOUT THE WELL-BEING OF THE TIBETAN PEOPLE UNDER CHINESE RULE AND CALLING ON SECRETARY POMPEO TO FULLY IMPLEMENT THE RECIPROCAL ACCESS TO TIBET ACT OF 2018 & THE TIBETAN POLICY ACT OF 2002.**

THE RECIPROCAL ACCESS TO TIBET ACT OF 2018. The Reciprocal Access to Tibet Act was passed by both the House and the Senate, and signed into law by the President on December 18, 2018. The Trump Administration should implement this law that holds China accountable for denying access to Tibet and promotes freedom to travel by US diplomats, journalists and citizens in Tibetan areas of the P.R.C. While Chinese officials and citizens have unfettered and free access across the United States, US officials and citizens are highly restricted in traveling to Tibet. Tibetan-Americans in particular face a discriminatory policy at the hands of Chinese embassy and consulates. See accompanying Fact Sheet.

THE TIBETAN POLICY ACT OF 2002 The Tibet Policy Act of 2002 (TPA) was signed into law by President George W Bush in September 2002. The objective is "to support the aspirations of the Tibetan people to safeguard their distinct identity" and it is a comprehensive and pragmatic expression of Congressional support for Tibetan people. It calls for the Administration to encourage the Government of the PRC to enter into negotiations with the Dalai Lama or his representatives. It establishes within the State Department, a United States Special Coordinator for Tibetan Issues (this position so far remains vacant), whose "central objective" is "to promote substantive dialogue" between the Chinese government and the Dalai Lama, or his representatives. See accompanying Fact Sheet.

What you can do: Sign on to the Letter circulated by Office of Chairman Jim McGovern. See accompanying Text.

2. ADVOCATE FOR TIBETAN PRISONERS OF CONSCIENCE AND FOR RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

FOR TIBETANS: The State Department 2018 Human Rights report released on March 13, 2019, documents “substantial interference with the rights of peaceful assembly and freedom of association; severe restrictions of religious freedom; significant restrictions on freedom of movement; and restrictions on political participation” for the people of Tibet. Tibetan Political prisoners endure harsh prison conditions, including torture, deprivation of food and sleep for long periods in isolation cells. Tibetans are frequently convicted of “crimes” for simply exercising basic fundamental human rights. See accompanying Fact Sheets.

What can you do:

- 1. Urge for religious freedom for Tibetans whenever US policy on China is discussed, and particularly during interactions with Chinese authorities.*
- 2. Adopt a Tibetan Political Prisoner. Join the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission’s “Defending Freedoms Project.”*
- 3. Raise the release of Tibetan political prisoners with Chinese government officials.*

3. FUNDING FOR TIBET-RELATED PROGRAMS IN THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE & FOREIGN

OPERATIONS APPROPRIATIONS BILL. The US Congress has been the vanguard of support for Tibetan issues for almost three decades. Through its annual appropriations process, Congress has provided support for economic development for Tibetan communities, humanitarian assistance for refugees, the Office of Special Coordinator for Tibetan issues at US Department of State, Tibetan language broadcasts of Voice of America & Radio Free Asia, scholarships for Tibetan students. These small but indispensable investments help empower Tibetans both in exile and inside Tibet to pursue the preservation and promotion of their distinct religious and cultural heritage during these difficult times. See accompanying Fact Sheet on Congress and Tibet – three decades of policy and programmatic support.

What can you do: *Support funding of Tibet-related programs in the Foreign Operations Appropriations Bill for 2020 at same level indicated in 2019.*