



INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR TIBET

Tibetan Americans make mini-Lobby Day a national success

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The International Campaign for Tibet's mini-Lobby Day for the Tibetan Policy and Support Act this week was a nationwide success, thanks to the hard work of Tibetan Americans, Tibet supporters and ICT members around the country.

From Capitol Hill in Washington, DC to legislators' local offices across the US, Tibet supporters came out in force on Monday and Tuesday, Oct. 21 and 22, 2019, to build support for the new legislation, which would comprehensively upgrade US support for Tibet and impose sanctions on any Chinese officials who attempt to appoint a future Dalai Lama.

Members of the Tibetan Association of Charlottesville, Virginia, the Tibetan American Community of Connecticut, the Tibetan Association of Ithaca, New York, Colorado Tibetan Association, and the Tibetan American Foundation of Minnesota were among those who visited their senators' and representatives' district offices to ask them to co-sponsor the bill, which was introduced last month in the House of Representatives by Rep. James McGovern (D-Mass.) and in the Senate by Sen. Marco Rubio (R-Fla.).

In Washington, members of the Capital Area Tibetan Association joined ICT staff on Capitol Hill to visit the offices of about 75 legislators over both days.

Many more Tibetan Americans and ICT members wrote letters to their members of Congress. As of the morning of Oct. 18, nearly 12,000 letters had been sent.

The efforts appear to be paying off immediately. On Monday, the Tibetan Policy and Support Act gained seven new co-sponsors in the House—Reps. David Cicilline (D-RI), Andy Levin (D-Mich.), Brian Mast (R-Fla.), Betty McCollum (D-Minn.), Eleanor Holmes Norton (D-DC), Chellie Pingree (D-Maine) and John Rutherford (R-Fla.)—adding to its original seven co-sponsors—Reps. Marcy Kaptur (D-Ohio), Tom Malinowski (D-NJ), Ben McAdams (D-Utah), Mark Meadows (R-NC), Brad Sherman (D-Calif.), Chris Smith (R-NJ) and Thomas Suozzi (D-NY).

In addition, the bill gained two new co-sponsors in the Senate, Sens. Marsha Blackburn (R-Tenn.) and Mike Braun (R-Ind.), who joined original co-sponsors Sens. Ben Cardin (D-Md.), Tom Cotton (R-Ark.), Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.), Lindsey Graham (R-SC) and Ed Markey (D-Mass.).

Quote

Matteo Mecacci, ICT president:

“From protecting the Dalai Lama’s genuine succession process to addressing water security and US consular access in Tibet, this legislation tackles issues that are of urgent concern not only to Tibetan Americans and Tibet supporters, but to all people in this country who believe strongly in religious freedom, environmental preservation, human rights and reciprocity from China. We were delighted to see nine more members of Congress co-sponsor the bill during our Lobby Day, and we look forward to continuing to work with Tibetan Americans and ICT members around the country to make this bill law.”