



## INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR TIBET

### House passes Tibetan Policy and Support Act!

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The Tibetan Policy and Support Act (TPSA) is now halfway through Congress.

Today, the House of Representatives voted overwhelmingly to approve the bill, a comprehensive piece of legislation that will [dramatically upgrade US political and humanitarian support for Tibetans](#), including the sanctioning of Chinese officials for interfering in the Dalai Lama's succession.

The TPSA focus will now move to the Senate, where it was introduced by Sens. Marco Rubio (R-Fla.) and Ben Cardin (D-MD). Rep. James McGovern (D-Mass.) introduced the bill in the House co-sponsored by Rep. Chris Smith (R-NJ).

The success of the TPSA has been aided by Tibetan Americans and Tibet supporters, including members of the International Campaign for Tibet, who've sent more than 12,000 messages so far to their members of Congress asking them to support the bill.

### What the bill does

The TPSA represents a major update to US policy on Tibet. Building on the landmark Tibetan Policy Act of 2002, it will:

- Make it official US policy that the selection of [Tibetan Buddhist](#) leaders, including a future Dalai Lama, should follow the desires of the Tibetan Buddhist community and the instructions of the [current Dalai Lama](#) without interference from the Chinese government
- Sanction Chinese officials who attempt to appoint their own Dalai Lama in the future. These sanctions could include having their assets frozen and entry to the US denied. The State Department will also have to work at the international level to build support for Tibetan Buddhists' freedom to choose their own leaders without government interference
- Forbid China from opening a new consulate in the US until a US consulate is [allowed in Lhasa](#), Tibet's capital
- Address [water security and environmental issues](#) in Tibet, which is warming at nearly three times the global average and provides water to more than 1 billion people in Asia
- Formalize funding for humanitarian projects for Tibetans living in Tibet and in exile until at least 2025
- Commend the Dalai Lama and Tibetans in exile for adopting a democratic system of government

[Read the text of the bill >](#)

## What's next

The Senate version of TPSA is before its Committee on Foreign Relations for approval.

After that, the bill needs to be passed by the entire Senate. After the House and the Senate versions are reconciled, if the need arises, it will be sent to President Trump to be signed and become law.

## Lobby for Tibet!

Tibetan Americans and other Tibet supporters will advocate for the bill during the International Campaign for Tibet's Tibet Lobby Day 2020, March 23-24.

The event will bring participants to Capitol Hill and to Congressional offices across the country to lobby their Senators to pass the TPSA.

The participants will also urge members of Congress to demand reciprocal access to Tibet and to help protect Tibet's environment.

[Sign up for Tibet Lobby Day!](#)

## Quotes from today's vote

### House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.):

*"Today, the House is taking action to update and strengthen that Policy Act to address these growing threats. We are supporting the Tibetan people's right to religious freedom and genuine autonomy by formally establishing a US policy that the Tibetan Buddhist community has the exclusive right to choose its religious leaders, including the 15th Dalai lama. imagine the Chinese government should think they should be choosing the next Dalai Lama of the Tibetan Buddhists. We are sending Beijing a clear signal they will be held accountable for interfering in Tibet's religious and cultural affairs, making clear that Chinese officials who meddle in the process in recognizing the new Dalai lama will be subject to targeted sanctions, including those in the Global Magnitsky act. We are protecting china's environmental -- excuse me -- we're protecting Tibet, which is in china. We are protecting Tibet's environmental and cultural rights, working with international governments and the business community to ensure that self-sufficiency of the Tibetan people, to protect the environment and water resources of the Tibetan plateau. This is really very important to sustainability of our planet. This legislation also deploys American diplomatic weight to encourage a genuine dialogue between Tibetan leaders and Beijing. It's unacceptable that the Chinese government still refuses to enter into a dialogue with Tibetan leaders. The Congress will and must continue to take action to hold china accountable."*

### Rep. James McGovern (D-Mass.), who introduced the Tibetan Policy and Support Act:

*"It is essential that US policy toward Tibet be updated and strengthened, and the bill we are considering today would establish as US policy that the succession or reincarnation of Tibetan Buddhist leaders, including a future 15th Dalai Lama, is an exclusively religious matter that should be decided solely by the Tibetan Buddhist community; send a clear*

*message that Chinese officials who interfere in the succession or reincarnation process will be subject to targeted financial, economic and visa-related sanctions, including those contained in the Global Magnitsky Act; strengthen the role of the State Department's special coordinator for Tibetan issues by including a mandate to work multilaterally to promote a genuine dialogue; mandate that no new Chinese consulate should be established in the United States until a US consulate is established in Tibet's historical capital of Lhasa; direct the State Department to begin collaborative, multinational efforts to protect the environment and water resources of the Tibetan Plateau; and support democratic governance in the Tibetan exile community...Standing together, the American people will remain steadfast partners of the Tibetan people."*

**Rep. Michael McCaul (R-Tex.), ranking Member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee:**

*"I want to thank Chairman McGovern for strengthening US support for Tibet at this critical moment. As the Tibetan community prepares for the Dalai lama's succession, we must rein in the communist party's attempt to destroy the autonomy of Tibetan Buddhism. I also want to thank the gentleman from Minnesota. I also want to thank Madam Speaker for her strong support for human rights and liberties and she stood on the floor. We debated the Hong Kong Democracy and Freedom Act. That's what we do as Americans, we defend freedom and we defend democracy."*

**Rep. Ted Yoho (R-Fla.):**

*"This legislation has wide bipartisan support in the House. And to the people of Tibet, know that we support your fight against adversity and for religious freedom. This legislation makes it clear that the US Congress will not sit on the sidelines and watch as a spectator, but rather advocate strongly for increased protections for the Tibetan people."*

**Rep. Dean Phillips (D-Minn.):**

*"The Tibetan Policy and Support Act also reauthorizes programs to preserve Tibetan culture and environment. The Tibetan Plateau is home to 10 major Asian river systems feeding 10 different Asian states, and these resources are being threatened by large-scale hydroelectric projects. These rivers are of immense importance to the livelihoods of not only Tibetan communities but also the nearly 2 billion people in South and East Asia. I urge all members to join me in supporting this very good measure to continue underscoring our support for the Tibetan people."*

**Rep. Thomas Suozzi (D-NY):**

*"The aspirations of the Tibetan people for dignity and freedom are viewed by the Chinese government as a direct threat to their existence as an authoritarian state. Re-education, surveillance methods pioneered in Tibet are being used to target the Uyghurs in Xinjiang, where the Chinese government has created a surveillance state unlike anything the world has seen. The Chinese communist party's repugnant campaign to destroy the cultural and religious identities of Tibetans and Uyghurs requires more than just words of condemnation. We must stand up to any country that restricts individual liberty and religious freedom."*

**Del. Eleanor Holmes Norton (D-D.C.):**

*"The Dalai Lama and his people have nothing to fight with except their own nonviolent determination and willingness of free people everywhere to raise their voices. The Tibetan Policy and Support Act before us today is important in conveying and reinforcing the understanding that the United States will never cease working to assure complete freedom for the Dalai Lama and his people."*

**@SenRubioPress tweet:**

*“The House of Representatives passed the companion bill (H.R. 4331) of Sen. Rubio's bipartisan Tibet Policy & Support Act of 2019 (S.2539). As the CCP continues to undermine Tibetan's human rights & autonomy, Rubio reaffirms his commitment of standing w/ the people of #Tibet.”*

**Matteo Mecacci, president of the International Campaign for Tibet:**

*“By passing the Tibetan Policy and Support Act today, the House is sending another clear message to Beijing that US support for Tibet is getting stronger and more institutionalized and will not waver despite China's bullying tactics. We look forward to this bill passing the Senate next and to it becoming law. As the US continues to address economic concerns with China, the call for preventing China from interfering in the selection of the next Dalai Lama and for finding a political solution that would address the legitimate grievances of the Tibetan people is not going away. Last year, a strong bipartisan coalition of lawmakers passed the [Reciprocal Access to Tibet Act](#)—which was then signed into law by President Trump—a bill that pushes for unrestricted and reciprocal access to Tibet for US journalists, diplomats and ordinary citizens, with the goal of ending the decades-long isolation imposed on Tibet by Beijing. This reflects the widespread support that the American people have for the people of Tibet.”*