



## INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR TIBET

### Video: McGovern, Rubio urge participation in virtual Tibet Lobby Day

<https://savetibet.org/video-mcgovern-rubio-urge-participation-in-virtual-tibet-lobby-day/>

March 17, 2020

To coincide with Tibet Lobby Day next week, members of Congress have sent video messages to participants to highlight the importance of their actions.

Rep. James McGovern, D-Mass., and Sen. Marco Rubio, R-Fla., in their messages thank and encourage everyone taking part in this year's Lobby Day on March 23 and 24.

McGovern and Rubio are the chair and co-chair of the Congressional-Executive Commission on China, as well as staunch supporters of the Tibetan people.

Watch their videos:

- [Rep. James McGovern \(D-Mass.\)](#)
- [Sen. Marco Rubio \(R-Fla.\)](#)

### Lobbying virtually

The videos from McGovern and Rubio were shot before Congress shut down public access to House and Senate office buildings until April 1 due to coronavirus fears.

As a result of the closure, this year's Lobby Day will take place through virtual meetings. Rather than come to Washington, DC, participants will have conference calls with the Congressional member or staff representing their home states and districts.

This solution will allow Lobby Day to go on while protecting the health and safety of everyone involved.

Thousands of International Campaign for Tibet members across the United States have already started sending both paper and online petitions to Senate and House members with the same message, and ICT will increase its online efforts during the Lobby Day.

### Three asks

During their phone calls next week, Lobby Day participants will make three main requests of members of Congress:

1. *Pass the [Tibetan Policy and Support Act](#) in the Senate.* This bill—which McGovern and Rubio introduced simultaneously both in the House and the Senate with Rep. Chris Smith, R-N.J., and Sen. Ben Cardin, D-Md.—will dramatically upgrade US support for Tibetans and make it

official US policy that only the [Dalai Lama](#) and [Tibetan Buddhist community](#) can decide his succession plans. If Chinese officials try to name the Dalai Lama's successor on their own—as they have pledged to do—they will face sanctions under this bill. The TPSA [overwhelmingly passed the House](#) in January; now it needs to pass the Senate and get signed into law by the president.

2. *Advocate for [Tibetan political prisoners](#) and [religious freedom in Tibet](#).* According to the [latest State Department human rights report](#), there are several hundred political prisoners in Tibet, and Tibetans face severe restrictions on practicing their faith. Members of Congress should raise these issues whenever they discuss US policy on China and especially when they meet with Chinese officials.
3. *Fund Tibet-related programs.* [US programs](#) provide vital humanitarian and development assistance to the Tibetan people, both in exile and inside Tibet, but make up only a tiny fraction of the US budget. Congress should continue funding these programs at the same level in 2021 as it has for 2020.

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## ICT quote

*Matteo Mecacci, ICT president:*

“Rep. McGovern and Sen. Rubio are two of the most consistent supporters of the Tibetan people in the US Congress, so it's wonderful to share their words of encouragement with Lobby Day participants. Even though the coronavirus makes in-person meetings impossible this year, we look forward to a successful virtual Tibet Lobby Day next week, and we know that Tibetan Americans and their allies will maximize this opportunity to advocate for laws and policies that will help improve the lives of the Tibetan people.”

[Learn more about Tibet Lobby Day.](#)



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