



INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR TIBET

House passes legislation targeting China, Olympic Committee

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The US House of Representatives recently passed three pieces of legislation denouncing the Chinese government for its abuses against Uyghurs, Tibetans and others, and the International Olympic Committee for failing to uphold its own human rights standards.

The legislation that passed Dec. 8, 2021 includes the Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act, as well as House Resolution 317, which condemns China's ongoing Uyghur genocide and crimes against humanity against religious and ethnic minorities in the People's Republic of China.

In addition, House Resolution 837 expresses the House's sense that the IOC failed to adhere to its own human rights commitments by acquiescing to the Chinese Communist Party's narrative on Peng Shuai, the Chinese tennis star who disappeared after publicly accusing a top CCP official of sexual abuse.

“By passing these measures, the House has increased the growing pressure on China over its horrific mistreatment of Uyghurs, Tibetans and other oppressed groups. The House has also demonstrated that it will hold accountable enablers of China like the IOC,” said the International Campaign for Tibet.

“These pieces of legislation build on the US' diplomatic boycott of the Beijing 2022 Winter Olympics; its declaration of genocide against the Uyghurs; and its passage of the Tibetan Policy and Support Act of 2020 and Reciprocal Access to Tibet Act of 2018. The Senate should now embrace the House's legislation, and the Biden administration should continue to urge governments to follow suit in diplomatically boycotting the Beijing Olympics. It is time for the world to stand together against China's human rights violations.”

Coerced labor

The Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act highlights the issue of Tibetan coerced labor. It references reports from last year that “hundreds of thousands of rural residents of the Tibet Autonomous Region participated in ‘military-style’ training, ideological education, and vocational training before being transferred to job postings in the [Tibet] Autonomous Region or elsewhere in China.”

The TAR comprises about half of Tibet, a historically independent country that China has brutally occupied for more than six decades. The watchdog group Freedom House recently declared Tibet the least-free country on Earth in a tie with Syria.

Last year, scholar Adrian Zenz published a groundbreaking report exposing the large-scale coercive labor program in the TAR. According to Zenz's research, the program pushed more than half a million rural Tibetans off their land and into military-style training centers in just the first seven months of 2020.

Afterward, many of the Tibetans were sent to other areas of Tibet and China and pushed into low-wage factory and construction work.

Following Zenz's report, more than 60 parliamentarians from 16 countries—including the United States—called on their governments to “take immediate action to condemn these atrocities and to prevent further human rights abuses.”

International Olympic Committee

The passage of the House legislation comes just months before the 2022 Beijing Winter Olympics, which begin in February.

House Resolution 837 takes the International Olympic Committee to task for “legitimizing” the Chinese government’s propaganda about Peng Shuai, a former no. 1-ranked doubles tennis player from China.

Peng disappeared after publicly accusing Zhang Gaoli, a former Chinese vice premier and Politburo member, of sexual assault. Although the Women’s Tennis Association has since suspended all its tournaments in China, the IOC has been willfully obtuse about the Chinese government’s behavior, insisting that Peng was “safe and well.”

The House resolution says the IOC’s conduct raises “questions about the organization’s ability and willingness to protect the rights of athletes participating in the 2022 Olympic and Paralympic games in Beijing.”

The resolution adds that the IOC should push China to fully investigate Peng’s case and allow her to provide independent, verifiable proof of her whereabouts and safety.

The International Campaign for Tibet has also said that, having made the obviously wrong decision to award the 2022 Olympics to Beijing, the IOC now has a clear obligation to verify that China abides by its code of ethics and commitments.

Diplomatic boycott

The House legislation also arrived just days after the Biden administration announced a diplomatic boycott of the Beijing Olympics.

A growing list of countries has joined the diplomatic boycott, including Australia, Canada, Kosovo, Lithuania and the United Kingdom.

The International Campaign for Tibet has called for other countries to join the boycott.

ICT also recently published a briefing paper documenting how China’s abuses in Tibet have increased since the last time Beijing hosted the Olympics in 2008.



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