



INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR TIBET

House Passes Tibet-China Dispute Bill

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The US House today passed a bill that will strengthen US efforts to push the Chinese government to resolve the longstanding Tibet-China dispute through dialogue with Tibetan leaders.

The bipartisan Promoting a Resolution to the Tibet-China Dispute Act passed today, Feb. 15, 2024.

Known as the Resolve Tibet Act, the bill aims to pressure the Chinese government to resume negotiations with the Dalai Lama's envoys or the democratically elected leaders of the Tibetan people, which have been stalled since 2010.

The bipartisan bill—introduced by Reps. Jim McGovern, D-Mass., and Michael McCaul, R-Texas—dismisses as inaccurate the Chinese claim that Tibet has been part of China since ancient times and empowers the State Department to actively counter China's disinformation about Tibetan history, people and institutions.

Following today's vote, focus will now shift to passing the Senate version of the legislation, introduced by Sens. Jeff Merkley, D-Ore., and Todd Young, R-Ind.

In recent years, the US government has dramatically increased its support for Tibet, including Congress passing the [Reciprocal Access to Tibet Act of 2018](#) and the [Tibetan Policy and Support Act of 2020](#).

Today's approval of the Resolve Tibet Act in the House comes as Tibetans prepare to mark 65 years since China forced the Dalai Lama to flee into exile and seized full control of Tibet.

After 65 years of Chinese occupation, [Tibet now ranks as the least-free country on Earth](#) alongside South Sudan and Syria, according to the watchdog group Freedom House.

Quotes from Congress members, Tibetan leaders

Several members of Congress spoke in support of the Resolve Tibet Act on the House floor on Feb. 13.

Rep. Jim McGovern, D-Mass., one of the lead sponsors of the bill, said: "A vote for this bill is a vote to recognize the rights of the Tibetan people. And it is a vote to insist on resolving the dispute between Tibet and the People's Republic of China peacefully, in accordance with international law, through dialogue, without preconditions. There is still an opportunity to do this. But time is running out."

Rep. Young Kim, R-Calif., said: “This bill ensures that Tibetans have a say in their own future. It stresses the need for a direct dialogue between the CCP and the democratically elected leaders of Tibet, and that any resolution must be peaceful and include the voice of the Tibetan people. Tibetans are democracy-loving people who wish to freely practice their religion and have their distinct identity acknowledged and respected. I’m proud to play a small part in supporting this dream for the Tibetan people.”

Rep. Kathy Manning, D-N.C., said: “Since 2010 Beijing has also refused to meet its international obligations to engage the Dalai Lama and his representatives to resolve the Tibet issue through dialogue. At the same time Beijing has unleashed a disinformation campaign to mislead the world about Tibet and its history. For this reason, we must pass H.R.533, which calls the PRC out for its repression and its unwillingness to engage the Tibetan people.”

Rep. Chris Smith, R-N.J., said: “Amid these threats to Tibetans in Tibet, the Chinese Communist Party also seeks to extend its repressive reach abroad, targeting for surveillance and harassment Tibetan diaspora communities in the United States, in India and in Nepal. The Chinese Communist Party has long engaged in crimes against humanity in Tibet and against Tibetans, plain and simple.”

Representative of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the Central Tibetan Administration to North America Namgyal Choedup said: “Tibetan people will always cherish the bipartisan support for Tibet in the US Congress. I would like to thank Chairman McCaul and Congressman Jim McGovern for taking the lead on this vital legislation. Tibetan people, despite seven decades of brutal and paralyzing oppression by the CCP, have never abandoned hope. The H.R.533 passage by the US House will boost the determination of the Tibetan people and their resilience. It also sends a clear message to the current regime under Xi Jinping that if they truly desire social harmony and stability, the only way is to come to the negotiating table in good faith to resolve the Tibet-China dispute.”

International Campaign for Tibet President Tencho Gyatso said: *“Today’s vote shows that US support for Tibet is only growing stronger even after 65 years of China’s control and occupation. China has been playing a waiting game, hoping that the international community would eventually abandon Tibet. Clearly that is not the case. The Chinese government should take the hint and restart the dialogue process with Tibetan leaders. We thank Congressman McGovern and Chairman McCaul and all the representatives who helped pass the Resolve Tibet Act today, and we look forward to working with Sens. Merkley and Young, as well as our supporters across the country, to make this bill the law of the land.”*

[Watch members of the House discuss the Resolve Tibet Act on the House floor.](#)

What the bill does

The Promoting a Resolution to the Tibet-China Dispute Act states that it is US policy that the dispute between Tibet and China must be resolved in accordance with international law, including the UN Charter, by peaceful means through dialogue without preconditions.

The legislation adds that the US should:

- Promote substantive dialogue without preconditions between the Chinese government and the Dalai Lama or his representatives or the democratically elected leaders of the Tibetan community. The US could also explore activities to improve prospects for dialogue leading to a negotiated agreement on Tibet.

- Coordinate with other governments in multilateral efforts toward the goal of a negotiated agreement on Tibet.
- Encourage China’s government to address the aspirations of the Tibetan people regarding their distinct historical, cultural, religious and linguistic identity.
- Use public diplomacy efforts to “counter disinformation about Tibet” from the Chinese government and Communist Party, including “disinformation about the history of Tibet, the Tibetan people, and Tibetan institutions including that of the Dalai Lama.”
- Empower the special coordinator for Tibetan issues in the State Department to work to ensure that US government statements and documents counter disinformation about Tibet.

Although the Chinese government attempts to shape a narrative that Tibet is only the Tibet Autonomous Region—an administrative region that spans less than half the Tibetan homeland—this legislation makes clear that Tibet also includes Tibetan regions of Gansu, Qinghai, Sichuan and Yunnan provinces.

[Read the bill.](#)

[Learn more about the Resolve Tibet Act.](#)



International Campaign for Tibet (ICT) | 1825 Jefferson Place NW | Washington, DC 20036 | United States of America
 Phone: (202) 785-1515 | Fax: (202) 785-4343 | info@savetibet.org

ICT Europe
 Funenpark 1D | 1018 AK
 Amsterdam, The Netherlands
 Phone: +31 (0)20 3308265
 Fax: +31 (0)20 3308266
icteurope@savetibet.nl

ICT Deutschland e.V.
 Schönhauser Allee 163 | 10435
 Berlin, Germany
 Phone: +49 (0)30 27879086
 Fax: +49 (0)30 27879087
info@savetibet.de

ICT Brussels
 11, rue de la linière | 1060
 Brussels, Belgium
 Phone: +32 (0)2 609 44 10
 Fax: +32 (0)2 609 44 32
info@savetibet.eu