

118TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 2766

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

FEBRUARY 26, 2024

Received; read twice and referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations

AN ACT

To support the human rights of Uyghurs and members of other minority groups residing primarily in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region and safeguard their distinct identity, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

1 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

2 This Act may be cited as the “Uyghur Policy Act of
3 2023”.

4 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

5 Congress finds the following:

6 (1) The People’s Republic of China (PRC) con-
7 tinues to repress the distinct Islamic, Turkic identity
8 of Uyghurs and members of other ethnic and reli-
9 gious minority groups in the Xinjiang Uyghur Au-
10 tonomous Region (XUAR) in northwestern China
11 and other areas of their habitual residence.

12 (2) Uyghurs, and other predominantly Muslim
13 ethnic minorities historically making up the majority
14 of the XUAR population, have maintained through-
15 out their history a distinct religious and cultural
16 identity.

17 (3) Human rights, including freedom of religion
18 or belief, and respect for the Uyghurs’ unique Mus-
19 lim identity are legitimate interests of the inter-
20 national community.

21 (4) The People’s Republic of China has ratified
22 the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and
23 Cultural Rights and has also signed the Inter-
24 national Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

25 (5) An official campaign to encourage Han Chi-
26 nese migration into the XUAR has placed immense

1 pressure on those who seek to preserve the ethnic,
2 cultural, religious, and linguistic traditions of the
3 Uyghurs and other ethnic and religious minority
4 groups.

5 (6) PRC authorities have supported an influx of
6 Han Chinese economic immigrants into the XUAR,
7 implemented discrimination against Uyghurs and
8 other minorities in hiring practices, and provided un-
9 equal access to healthcare services.

10 (7) The authorities of the People's Republic of
11 China have manipulated the strategic objectives of
12 the international war on terror to mask their in-
13 creasing cultural and religious oppression of the
14 Muslim population residing in the XUAR.

15 (8) Following unrest in the region, in 2014,
16 Chinese authorities launched their "Strike Hard
17 against Violent Extremism" campaign, in which du-
18 bious allegations of widespread extremist activity
19 were used as justification for gross human rights
20 violations committed against Uyghurs and members
21 of other minority communities in the XUAR.

22 (9) PRC authorities have made use of the legal
23 system as a tool of repression, including for the im-
24 position of arbitrary detentions and for torture

1 against members of the Uyghur community and
2 other minority populations.

3 (10) Uyghurs and Kazakhs who have secured
4 citizenship or permanent residency outside of the
5 PRC have attested to repeated threats, harassment,
6 and surveillance by PRC officials.

7 (11) Reporting from international news organi-
8 zations has found that over the past decade, family
9 members of Uyghurs and other minority groups liv-
10 ing outside of the PRC have gone missing or been
11 detained to force Uyghur expatriates to return to
12 the PRC or silence their dissent.

13 (12) Credible evidence from human rights orga-
14 nizations, think tanks, and journalists confirms that
15 more than 1,000,000 Uyghurs and members of other
16 Muslim ethnic minority groups have been imprisoned
17 in “political reeducation” centers.

18 (13) Independent accounts from former detain-
19 ees of “political reeducation” centers describe inhu-
20 mane conditions and treatment including forced po-
21 litical indoctrination, torture, beatings, rape, forced
22 sterilization, and food deprivation.

23 (14) Former detainees of PRC so-called “polit-
24 ical reeducation” centers also confirmed that they
25 were told by guards the only way to secure release

1 was to demonstrate sufficient political loyalty to the
2 PRC Government and the Chinese Communist
3 Party.

4 (15) Popular discourse surrounding the ongoing
5 atrocities in the XUAR and advocacy efforts to as-
6 sist Uyghurs remains muted in much of the world,
7 including in most Muslim majority nations.

8 (16) Both Secretary of State Antony Blinken
9 and Former Secretary of State Michael Pompeo
10 have stated that the PRC government has com-
11 mitted genocide and crimes against humanity
12 against Uyghurs and other ethnic and religious mi-
13 norities in the XUAR.

14 (17) Government bodies of multiple nations
15 have also declared that PRC government atrocities
16 against such populations in the XUAR constitute
17 genocide, including the parliaments of the United
18 Kingdom, Belgium, Czechia, Lithuania, the Nether-
19 lands, and Canada.

20 **SEC. 3. SENSE OF CONGRESS.**

21 It is the sense of Congress that—

22 (1) the Government of the People’s Republic of
23 China should immediately open the Xinjiang Uyghur
24 Autonomous Region (XUAR) to regular, trans-
25 parent, and unmanipulated visits by members of the

1 press, international organizations including the Of-
2 fice of the United Nations High Commissioner for
3 Human Rights, academic and human rights research
4 institutions, as well as foreign delegations including
5 from the United States Congress;

6 (2) Government of the People's Republic of
7 China should recognize, and take tangible steps to
8 protect and preserve, the distinct ethnic, cultural, re-
9 ligious, and linguistic identity of Uyghurs and mem-
10 bers of other ethnic and religious minority groups in
11 the XUAR;

12 (3) the Government of the People's Republic of
13 China should cease all government-sponsored crack-
14 downs, imprisonments, and detentions of people
15 throughout the XUAR aimed at repressing their eth-
16 nic, cultural, political, or religious identities;

17 (4) it is commendable for countries to provide
18 shelter and hospitality to Uyghurs and other minor-
19 ity group members in exile, as Turkey, Albania, and
20 Germany have done;

21 (5) urges all countries, especially fellow democ-
22 racies and those with sizeable Muslim populations,
23 to condemn and address the plight of Uyghurs and
24 other minority communities in the XUAR;

1 (6) the Government of the PRC should imme-
2 diately and unconditionally release all prisoners de-
3 tained for their ethnic, cultural, religious, and lin-
4 guistic identities, or for expressing their political or
5 religious beliefs in the XUAR, including—

6 (A) Ekper Asat, who participated in the
7 Department of State’s International Visitors
8 Leadership Program in 2016, was incarcerated
9 after returning to the XUAR, and is now serv-
10 ing a 15 year prison sentence on charges of “in-
11 citing ethnic hatred and ethnic discrimination”;

12 (B) Dr. Gulshan Abbas, a retired medical
13 doctor and Uyghur, who was wrongfully de-
14 tained in the XUAR on September 11, 2018,
15 and unjustly sentenced to 20 years in prison in
16 retaliation for her sister’s advocacy for Uyghur
17 human rights issues; and

18 (C) Kamile Wayit, a university student
19 and Uyghur, who was wrongfully detained on
20 December 12, 2022, after returning to the
21 XUAR while on break from studying during the
22 winter holiday;

23 (7) the Government of the PRC should facili-
24 tate access for international humanitarian organiza-
25 tions, including the International Federation of Red

1 Cross and Red Crescent Societies, to the “political
2 reeducation” centers in the XUAR to ensure pris-
3 oners are not being mistreated and are receiving
4 necessary medical care; and

5 (8) the United States Agency for Global Media
6 should continue to facilitate the unhindered dissemi-
7 nation of information to the international commu-
8 nity on issues regarding the human rights and reli-
9 gious freedom of Uyghurs and members of other mi-
10 nority groups in the XUAR.

11 **SEC. 4. UNITED STATES SPECIAL COORDINATOR FOR**
12 **UYGHUR ISSUES.**

13 (a) IN GENERAL.—There is authorized to be within
14 the Department of State a United States Special Coordi-
15 nator for Uyghur Issues (in this section referred to as the
16 “Special Coordinator”), to be designated by the Secretary
17 of State in accordance with subsection (b).

18 (b) CONSULTATION.—The Secretary of State shall
19 consult with the Chairs and Ranking Members of the
20 Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate and the
21 Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representa-
22 tives prior to the designation of the Special Coordinator.

23 (c) CENTRAL OBJECTIVE.—The Special Coordinator
24 should seek to promote the protection and preservation of
25 the distinct ethnic, cultural, religious, and linguistic iden-

1 tities of the Uyghurs and other ethnic and religious minor-
2 ity groups in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (in
3 this Act referred to as the “XUAR”).

4 (d) DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES.—The Special
5 Coordinator should, as appropriate—

6 (1) coordinate United State Government poli-
7 cies, programs, and projects concerning the Uyghurs
8 and members of other ethnic and religious minority
9 groups in the XUAR;

10 (2) vigorously promote the policy of seeking to
11 protect the distinct ethnic, religious, cultural, and
12 linguistic identity of the Uyghurs and other minority
13 groups and seek improved protection of human
14 rights in the XUAR;

15 (3) maintain close contact with Uyghur reli-
16 gious, cultural, and political leaders, including seek-
17 ing regular travel to the XUAR and to Uyghur pop-
18 ulations in Central Asia, Turkey, Albania, Germany,
19 and other parts of Europe;

20 (4) lead coordination efforts for the release of
21 political prisoners in the XUAR who are being de-
22 tained for exercising their human rights;

23 (5) consult with the United States Congress on
24 policies relevant to the XUAR and the Uyghurs;

1 (6) coordinate with relevant Federal agencies to
2 administer aid to Uyghur rights advocates; and

3 (7) make efforts to establish contacts with for-
4 eign ministries of other countries, especially in Eu-
5 rope, Central Asia, and members of the Organisation
6 of Islamic Cooperation, to pursue a policy of pro-
7 moting greater respect for human rights and reli-
8 gious freedom for Uyghurs and other ethnic and re-
9 ligious minority groups from the XUAR.

10 (e) SUPPORT.—The Secretary of State shall ensure
11 the Special Coordinator has adequate resources, staff, and
12 administrative support to carry out this section.

13 (f) DEADLINE.—If the Secretary of State has not
14 designated the Special Coordinator by the date that is 180
15 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Sec-
16 retary shall submit to the Committee on Foreign Affairs
17 of the House of Representatives and the Committee on
18 Foreign Relations of the Senate a report detailing the rea-
19 sons for the delay.

20 (g) TERMINATION.—This section shall terminate on
21 the date that is 5 years after the date of the designation
22 of the Special Coordinator.

1 **SEC. 5. FUNDING FOR HUMAN RIGHTS ADVOCATES TO CON-**
2 **DUCT PUBLIC DIPLOMACY IN THE ISLAMIC**
3 **WORLD ON THE UYGHUR SITUATION.**

4 Of the amounts authorized to be appropriated for the
5 U.S. Speaker program of the Bureau of Educational and
6 Cultural Affairs of the Department of State, \$250,000 for
7 each of fiscal years 2024, 2025, and 2026 is authorized
8 to be made available to support human rights advocates
9 working on behalf of the Uyghurs and members of other
10 ethnic and religious minority groups from the XUAR that
11 are persecuted in the PRC, whose names may be provided
12 by the Department of State and the United States Special
13 Coordinator for Uyghur Issues in consultation with rep-
14 resentatives of the global Uyghur community, to speak at
15 global public diplomacy forums, particularly those in
16 which Organisation of Islamic Cooperation countries and
17 other Muslim-majority countries are present, on issues re-
18 garding the human rights and religious freedom of
19 Uyghurs and members of other ethnic and religious minor-
20 ity groups persecuted in the PRC.

21 **SEC. 6. ACCESS TO DETENTION FACILITIES AND PRISONS**
22 **AND THE RELEASE OF PRISONERS.**

23 (a) STRATEGY ON POLITICAL REEDUCATION AND
24 DETENTION FACILITIES.—Not later than 180 days after
25 the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of
26 State should, in consultation with the heads of other rel-

1 evant Federal departments and agencies, develop a strat-
2 egy to cooperate with like-minded partners to pressure the
3 People’s Republic of China to—

4 (1) close all detention facilities and “political
5 reeducation” camps housing Uyghurs and members
6 of other ethnic minority groups in the XUAR;

7 (2) allow unhindered access to detention facili-
8 ties and “political reeducation” camps in the XUAR
9 by independent media, researchers, international or-
10 ganizations and the Office of the United Nations
11 High Commissioner for Human Rights for a com-
12 prehensive assessment of the human rights situation;
13 and

14 (3) protect human rights and preserve the dis-
15 tinct religious and cultural identity of the Uyghurs
16 and the other religious and ethnic minority commu-
17 nities in the XUAR.

18 (b) REPORT ON STRATEGY AND IMPLEMENTATION.—
19 Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of
20 this Act, the Secretary of State shall submit to the Com-
21 mittee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives
22 and the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate
23 a report that includes—

24 (1) the strategy developed pursuant to sub-
25 section (a); and

1 (2) all the steps taken pursuant to the objec-
2 tives described in paragraphs (1) through (3) of
3 such subsection.

4 **SEC. 7. REQUIREMENT FOR UYGHUR LANGUAGE TRAINING.**

5 (a) UYGHUR LANGUAGE TRAINING AND STAFFING.—

6 The Secretary of State shall take such steps as may be
7 necessary to ensure that—

8 (1) Uyghur language training is available to
9 Foreign Service officers as appropriate; and

10 (2) every effort is made to ensure that at least
11 one Uyghur-speaking member of the Foreign Service
12 (as such term is defined by section 103 of the For-
13 eign Service Act of 1980 (22 U.S.C. 3903)) is as-
14 signed to each United States diplomatic or consular
15 post in China.

16 (b) REPORT.—No later than 1 year after the date
17 of the enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter for
18 2 years, the Foreign Service Institute shall submit to the
19 Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representa-
20 tives and the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Sen-
21 ate a report that outlines all the steps taken to implement
22 subsection (a).

1 **SEC. 8. UYGHUR CONSIDERATIONS AT THE UNITED NA-**
2 **TIONS.**

3 The President should direct the United States Per-
4 manent Representative to the United Nations to use the
5 voice, vote, and influence of the United States to—

6 (1) oppose any efforts to prevent consideration
7 of the gross violation of internationally recognized
8 human rights in the XUAR in any body of the
9 United Nations;

10 (2) oppose any efforts to prevent the participa-
11 tion of any Uyghur human rights advocates in non-
12 governmental fora hosted by or otherwise organized
13 under the auspices of any body of the United Na-
14 tions; and

15 (3) support the appointment of a special
16 rapporteur or working group for the XUAR for the
17 purposes of monitoring human rights violations and
18 abuses in the XUAR, and for making reports avail-
19 able to the High Commissioner for Refugees, the
20 High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Human
21 Rights Commission, the General Assembly, and
22 other United Nations bodies.

1 SEC. 9. NO ADDITIONAL FUNDS AUTHORIZED.

2 No additional funds are authorized to carry out the
3 requirements of this Act. Such requirements shall be car-
4 ried out using amounts otherwise authorized.

Passed the House of Representatives February 15,
2024.

Attest: KEVIN F. MCCUMBER,
Clerk.