

United States Senate

February 25, 2021

The Honorable Joe Biden
President
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President,

Since the founding of our great nation, the United States has stood as an unapologetic champion for freedom and democracy. As we have before, America must again take a stand for human rights and show the world that we remain, in the words of President Ronald Reagan, “a shining city on a hill whose beacon light guides freedom-loving people everywhere.”

It is in this spirit that I write to you today to make clear that the horrific human rights abuses perpetrated by China’s communist government against its own people cannot be ignored. Under no circumstance should the global community give Communist China an international platform to whitewash its crimes, which is what will happen if they are allowed to host the 2022 Olympic Games in Beijing.

As I continue to urge the International Olympic Committee (IOC) to move the games out of Communist China and to a country that respects basic human rights. I request your immediate attention and the opportunity to meet with you to discuss the horrific human rights atrocities occurring across Communist China and the effort to select a new site for the 2022 Winter Olympics Games.

In Xinjiang, more than one million Uyghurs are detained in concentration camps designed to erase their religious and ethnic cultural identities. Many Uyghurs are subjected to torture and those who are not being tortured inside the camps work as slave laborers in factories. New reports¹ reveal systematic sexual assault within Communist China's vast detention network. The Chinese Communist Party, controlled by General Secretary Xi, is committing a genocide against these innocent people, simply because of their religious beliefs. It is a disgusting and unacceptable violation of basic human dignity.

In Hong Kong, the Chinese Communist Party has worked to strip away the civil liberties of more than five million people. Those who peacefully protest the oppression of Beijing are arrested and labeled a “national security threat.” Right now, nine pro-democracy activists, including Jimmy Lai, are

¹ <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-china-55794071>

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facing prison sentences because they dared to stand for freedom, offending the fragile sensibilities of General Secretary Xi. The Chinese Communist Party also believes they have global jurisdiction to prosecute violators of its "national security law." In August, Chinese Communist Party officials issued an arrest warrant for an American citizen living in the United States for his vocal defense of the rights of Hong Kongers. For the past two Congresses, bipartisan legislation has been introduced in the U.S. Senate calling on the IOC to move the 2022 games out of Beijing unless the People's Republic of China demonstrates significant progress in securing fundamental human rights. Unfortunately, Senate Democrats blocked its passage last year. Hundreds of human rights groups have called on the IOC to move the games, and government officials in other Western countries, including Australia, Canada and the United Kingdom, have shared their concern about giving an international platform to the Chinese Communist Party to spread propaganda.

I want to make very clear that the United States cannot simply boycott the games. Boycotts hurt athletes who have spent their lives training to represent their country on the international stage. This is about human rights, which we all have a responsibility to address.

The Olympic Games give the world's best athletes a chance to represent their countries and unite our nations. These games should be a stage upon which we celebrate athletic talent and our shared values. This cannot be achieved if we ignore the grotesque abuses of the Chinese Communist Party and allow the games to be hosted in Beijing, furthering the oppression we all unequivocally condemn. This is also about the safety of all athletes and attendees.

Working together, we can seize this opportunity to show that America is the world's greatest supporter of freedom, democracy and human rights for all, while preserving the marvel that is and must always be so perfectly captured by the unity created by the Olympic Games.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Rick Scott". The signature is stylized with a large initial "R" and a long, sweeping underline.

Rick Scott
United States Senator