

118TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. RES. 1221

Marking the 35th anniversary of the Tiananmen Square massacre and condemning the ongoing and often brutal suppression of human rights and basic freedoms by the Government of the People's Republic of China and Chinese Communist Party, including in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MAY 10, 2024

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey (for himself and Ms. WEXTON) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

RESOLUTION

Marking the 35th anniversary of the Tiananmen Square massacre and condemning the ongoing and often brutal suppression of human rights and basic freedoms by the Government of the People's Republic of China and Chinese Communist Party, including in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, and for other purposes.

Whereas June 4, 2024, marks the 35th anniversary of the violent crackdowns on peaceful demonstrations held on Tiananmen Square in central Beijing and in 400 other cities in the People's Republic of China;

Whereas these demonstrations included an estimated 1,000,000 Chinese citizens from all walks of life, including students, government employees, journalists, workers,

police officers, and members of the Armed Forces, who gathered peacefully to call for democratic reforms;

Whereas these peaceful demonstrators called upon the Government of the People's Republic of China to eliminate corruption, accelerate economic and political reform, and protect human rights, particularly the freedoms of expression and assembly—concerns that remain pertinent in China today;

Whereas the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party sent armed People's Liberation Army (PLA) troops and tanks into Beijing and surrounding areas beginning on June 3, 1989, killing and injuring thousands of demonstrators and other unarmed civilians, including in Tiananmen Square;

Whereas the Government of the People's Republic of China continues to censor any mention of the crackdown centered on Tiananmen Square and prevents the victims from being publicly mourned and remembered;

Whereas the Government of the People's Republic of China harasses, detains, and arrests those who call for a full, public, and independent accounting of the wounded, dead, and those imprisoned for participating in the spring 1989 demonstrations—including the Tiananmen Mothers Group;

Whereas the people of Hong Kong had held annual Tiananmen Square vigils since 1990 in Victoria Park, which were the only such mass gathering on Chinese territory because commemorations of the event are banned in mainland China;

Whereas the longstanding tradition of Hong Kong vigils came to an end in 2020 when Hong Kong police denied appli-

cations for assembly pretextually on COVID-related grounds and then jailed key organizers of the annual event on politically motivated criminal charges involving unlawful assembly or national security;

Whereas Chow Hang-tung, Tang Ngok-kwan, and Tsui Hon-kwong—members of the Hong Kong Alliance that organized the annual vigil—were convicted for resisting police demand to surrender the personal information of alliance members;

Whereas Hong Kong police arrested 24 prominent individuals, including Joshua Wong, Gwyneth Ho, Jimmy Lai, and Lee Cheuk-yan on charges of unlawful assembly or inciting unlawful assembly simply for showing up at Victoria Park in 2020;

Whereas the central Government of the People’s Republic of China and the Government of Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) have since used the National Security Law imposed on the HKSAR in 2020 by the PRC’s National People’s Congress Standing Committee to suppress peaceful protests and democratic voices in Hong Kong, including by barring candidates from standing for election and by arresting more than 1,000 pro-democracy activists and opposition leaders;

Whereas, in March 2024, the Hong Kong Legislative Council passed national security legislation pursuant to Article 23 of the Basic Law, which gives law enforcement additional powers to prosecute people on vague charges, thereby augmenting the risk of arbitrary detention, including the suppression of peaceful protests, vigils, and assemblies the Hong Kong government does not like;

Whereas to protest censorship and harsh zero-COVID policy, mass protests in November 2022 spurred the largest mass demonstrations in China since 1989;

Whereas these protests were in part spurred by the actions of Peng Lifa, also called “Bridgeman,” who unfurled two banners over the Sitong Bridge in Beijing which read “We don’t want Covid Tests, we want food. We don’t want Cultural Revolution, we want reform. We don’t want lockdowns, we want freedom. We don’t want an autocrat, we want votes. We don’t want lies, we want dignity. We are citizens, not slaves.”;

Whereas Li Kangmeng, a university student, was reportedly the first person to hold up a blank sheet of white paper to highlight pervasive censorship in China, inspiring others to adopt this symbol as a form of protest—giving a name to the 2022 protests as the “White Paper Movement”;

Whereas Peng Lifa and Li Kangmeng remain in some form of detention, despite being nominated by Members of the Congress for the Nobel Peace Prize;

Whereas an unknown amount of other people engaged in protest remain detained or disappeared, including university student Kamile Wayit, who was sentenced for “extremism” because she posted protest video on the Chinese social media platform WeChat;

Whereas the Government of the People’s Republic of China continues to commit gross violations of international-recognized human rights—through the arbitrary detention, torture, and harassment of pro-democracy activists, members of ethnic groups, religious believers, human rights lawyers, citizen journalists, and labor union leaders,

among many others seeking to express their political or religious views or ethnic identity in a peaceful manner;

Whereas the Government of the People's Republic of China is responsible for genocide and crimes against humanity being committed against the Uyghurs and other predominantly Muslim ethnic groups in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region;

Whereas the Government of the People's Republic of China has engaged in forced collection of biometric information from Tibetans and separates Tibetan children from their parents in colonial boarding schools, a practice that may constitute crimes against humanity; and

Whereas Congress took steps, over the past 35 years, to remember the Tiananmen demonstrations and their violent suppression because of the profound impact the event has had on United States-People's Republic of China relations and because commemorating Tiananmen was censored and banned in China and now in Hong Kong: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

2 (1) marks the 35th anniversary of the
3 Tiananmen Square protests and their violent sup-
4 pression by recognizing the solemn significance of
5 the 1989 demonstrations and the impact the
6 Tiananmen Massacre has had on United States-Peo-
7 ple's Republic of China relations;

8 (2) will continue to participate in somber re-
9 membrances for the victims of the Tiananmen Mas-

1 sacre for as long as commemorations are banned in
2 the People's Republic of China;

3 (3) calls on the United States Government to—

4 (A) urge the Government of the People's
5 Republic of China to cease censoring informa-
6 tion and discussion about the Tiananmen Mas-
7 sacre and end efforts of intimidation and sur-
8 veillance against those seeking to remember
9 loved ones killed or missing or to commemorate
10 June 4, 1989, within China;

11 (B) seek the unconditional release of polit-
12 ical prisoners in the People's Republic of China,
13 including those such as Peng Lifa, Li
14 Kangmeng, Kamile Wayit and others arrested
15 for peacefully engaging in protests in China;

16 (C) demand the end of transnational re-
17 pression efforts in the United States targeting
18 people from Hong Kong, former Tiananmen
19 student leaders, Uyghurs, Tibetans, and others
20 exercising fundamental freedoms and free
21 speech abroad;

22 (D) urge the Government of the Hong
23 Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR)
24 and authorities of the Government of the Peo-
25 ple's Republic of China to—

1 (i) allow resumption of the annual
2 vigil to commemorate the Tiananmen Mas-
3 sacre in Hong Kong;

4 (ii) release all political prisoners, in-
5 cluding Chow Hang-tung, Jimmy Lai,
6 Joshua Wong and others jailed in Hong
7 Kong in part for organizing or attending a
8 Tiananmen vigil; and

9 (iii) lift the arrest “bounties” on the
10 people of Hong Kong who engage in peace-
11 ful pro-democracy activities abroad;

12 (E) employ existing sanctions authorities
13 for HKSAR officials, including prosecutors and
14 judges, complicit in the undermining of Hong
15 Kong high degree of autonomy and the funda-
16 mental freedoms guaranteed by international
17 law and treaty;

18 (F) use the voice, vote, and influence of
19 the United States at the United Nations to seek
20 urgent discussions of the human rights record
21 of the Government of the People’s Republic of
22 China and the HKSAR at the United Nations
23 Security Council and at the United Nation’s
24 Human Rights Council; and

1 (G) make clear through public messaging
2 campaigns that the people of the United States
3 want the people living in the People’s Republic
4 of China to be able to exercise all of their inter-
5 nationally-recognized human rights without
6 fear, and that efforts by the United States Gov-
7 ernment to hold People’s Republic of China of-
8 ficials accountable for human rights abuses are
9 undertaken in solidarity with them and their as-
10 pirations for liberty; and

11 (4) calls on Members of Congress to—

12 (A) issue public statements and arrange
13 meetings with participants of the Tiananmen
14 Square protests who live outside of China and
15 the families and friends of the victims of the
16 Tiananmen Square massacre based outside
17 China; and

18 (B) use the Political Prisoner Database
19 maintained by the Congressional-Executive
20 Commission on China for information when
21 raising political prisoner cases with the Govern-
22 ment of the People’s Republic of China or
23 HKSAR officials.

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