

Safeguarding Freedom: Countering CCP Transnational Repression

Remarks by Rep. Chris Smith (R-NJ) , Co-Chair CECC—7/17/25

Thank you to the Tuidang Center for inviting me to speak on this most important topic, that of transnational repression.

Indeed, its importance was underscored as you all know by an incident in this very hall just last week which marred an otherwise excellent event recognizing the tenth anniversary of the 709 Crackdown on human rights attorneys and human rights advocates by Xi Jinping and the Chinese Communist Party.

Transnational repression is bad and getting worse by the day.

But one community which does not need to be educated on what transnational repression is you, members of the Falun Gong, because you experience it on an almost daily basis.

You know full well about the CCP's campaign against anyone who dares to speak out against them abroad, including the use of violence.

Indeed, Falun Gong practitioners and fellow pro-democracy advocates are directly in the crosshairs.

Many here in this room are unfortunately familiar with the tactics the CCP uses to target individuals and groups, especially adherents to Falun Gong. Even the most peaceful demonstrations of freedom of expression have been targeted, including the Shen Yun Performing Arts shows around the world.

Shen Yun, which holds the noble mission of “showing China before communism” and reviving traditional Chinese culture, has been

relentlessly targeted by the Chinese government for its religiosity and depictions of the CCP's historic campaign of cruelty and violence against peaceful practitioners of Falun Dafa.

[The CCP has targeted Shen Yun hundreds of times](#) since its inception in 2006 through threatening performing spaces that host them, sponsors that support them, and even performers and their family members in China.

In recent years, there's been an [uptick in these threats](#), even right here in [Washington, D.C.](#) as evidenced by the [bomb threat called into the Kennedy Center](#) this year in advance of Shen Yun's performance. This is in addition to the [sudden barrage of bomb and death threats](#) directed earlier this year, not only at Shen Yun performers, but also Falun Gong practitioners and members of Congress supportive of Falun Gong.

The CCP though, as we know, targets more than just Falun Gong practitioners. This year alone, we've seen reports of lawfare, social media harassment, cyber-hacking, and physical threats against democracy advocates around the world, including the United States.

In addition to Falun Gong practitioners, the CCP targets Hong Kongers, Uyghurs, Tibetans, and even those who just seek to peacefully call attention to the atrocities being committed by the CCP. Perhaps the most egregious example of transnational repression by the PRC we've seen to date in America was that of the attacks of peaceful protestors at the 2023 APEC Summit in San Francisco.

Leading up to and during the Summit, activists speaking out against Xi Jinping and the CCP were met with intense harassment, threats, and even violence. Some were attacked with flagpoles and

chemical spray, had their phones stolen and destroyed, or were physically assaulted. [The Washington Post, doing excellent reporting, revealed](#) how officials from the Chinese consulates in San Francisco and Los Angeles helped choreograph the mayhem. And through it all, the San Francisco Police Department took almost no action to intervene.

These peaceful protestors, exercising their First Amendment right to peaceably assemble, were attacked in open day light, the assaults captured on video, and given almost no protection.

As Chairman of the Congressional-Executive Commission on China, I held a press conference to highlight the victims of these attacks in December 2023, and also wrote a letter with my co-chair, Senator Jeff Merkley, to then-Attorney General Merrick Garland demanding an additional investigation into the violence.

That is why last Congress, Senator Merkley and I introduced the bipartisan, bicameral [Transnational Repression Policy Act](#).

The legislation—which we will soon reintroduce—will significantly mitigate transnational repression including actions of foreign governments to intimidate, silence, or harm members of diaspora and exile communities to prevent them from exercising their human rights.

- It requires the President to impose property and visa-blocking sanctions on certain foreign persons—individuals and entities—that directly engage in transnational repression.
- It also requires the Department of State to develop a strategy to promote initiatives that (1) enhance international awareness of transnational repression; (2) address transnational repression, including by raising the

costs of perpetrating repressive activities and by protecting targeted individuals and groups; and (3) conduct outreach to those targeted by foreign governments.

- Additionally, the State Department and the Department of Justice must provide training to certain individuals (e.g., relevant federal employees and law enforcement partners) on specified aspects of transnational repression.
- And the bill directs the intelligence community to prioritize, to the extent feasible, the identification of those perpetrating transnational repression against communities in the United States.

As you all know, the Chinese Communist Party is in a race to the bottom on human rights abuse of every kind.

Every year under General Secretary Xi Jinping, tens of thousands of young women and men—average age 28—are murdered in cold blood to steal their internal organs for profit or to be transplanted into communist party members and leaders.

These crimes against humanity are unimaginably cruel and painful. Between 2 to 6 internal organs per victim are extracted. It is murder masquerading as medicine.

Over the years I have chaired several hearings on this barbaric abuse and two years ago—on March 27th—the House passed my [Stop Forced Organ Harvesting Act of 2023, 413 to 2](#); and two months ago on May 7th, (H.R 1503) again [passed the Stop Forced Organ Harvesting Act , 406 to 1.](#)

I respectfully ask everyone here to ask the Senate to pass it now.