

117TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

**S.** \_\_\_\_\_

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

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IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

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Mr. RUBIO introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on \_\_\_\_\_

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**A BILL**

To support the human rights of Uyghurs and members of other ethnic groups residing primarily in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region and safeguard their distinct civilization and 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,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Uyghur Policy Act of  
5 2021”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds the following:

1           (1) The Chinese Communist Party continues to  
2           repress the distinct Turkic identity of Uyghurs and  
3           members of other predominantly Muslim ethnic  
4           groups in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region  
5           and in other areas where they have habitually re-  
6           sided.

7           (2) Uyghurs, and other predominantly Muslim  
8           ethnic groups make up the majority of the indige-  
9           nous population in the area that the Chinese Com-  
10          munist Party has designated as the Xinjiang  
11          Uyghur Autonomous Region (XUAR). Throughout  
12          their history, Uyghurs and other predominately  
13          Muslim ethnic groups have maintained a civilization  
14          that was distinct from the Chinese. For centuries,  
15          these Turkic groups were not under Chinese rule.

16          (3) Human rights, including freedom of religion  
17          or belief, and the preservation of and respect for the  
18          Uyghurs' unique Turkic and Islamic civilization and  
19          identity are legitimate interests of the international  
20          community.

21          (4) The People's Republic of China (PRC) has  
22          ratified the International Covenant on Economic,  
23          Social, and Cultural Rights, done at New York De-  
24          cember 16, 1966, and is thereby bound by its provi-  
25          sions. China has also signed the International Cov-

1       enant on Civil and Political Rights. Article One of  
2       both covenants state that all peoples have the right  
3       to self-determination.

4               (5) An official campaign to encourage Chinese  
5       migration into the XUAR has placed immense pres-  
6       sure on those who seek to preserve the ethnic, cul-  
7       tural, religious, and linguistic traditions of the  
8       Uyghurs people. Chinese authorities have supported  
9       an influx of Chinese economic immigrants into the  
10      XUAR, discriminated against Uyghurs in hiring  
11      practices, and provided unequal access to healthcare  
12      services.

13              (6) The Chinese Communist Party has manipu-  
14      lated the strategic objectives of the international war  
15      on terror to mask their increasing cultural and reli-  
16      gious oppression of the predominantly Muslim popu-  
17      lation residing in the XUAR.

18              (7) Following unrest in the region, in 2014, the  
19      Chinese Communist Party launched its “Strike Hard  
20      against Violent Extremism” campaign, in which du-  
21      bious allegations of widespread extremist activity  
22      were used as justification for gross human rights  
23      violations committed against members of the Uyghur  
24      community.

1           (8) Chinese Communist Party officials have  
2           made use of the legal system as a tool of repression,  
3           including for the imposition of arbitrary detentions  
4           and for torture against members of the Uyghur and  
5           other populations.

6           (9) Uyghurs and Kazakhs who have secured  
7           citizenship or permanent residency outside of the  
8           PRC have attested to repeated threats, harassment,  
9           and surveillance by PRC officials.

10          (10) Reporting from international news organi-  
11          zations has found that over the past decade, family  
12          members of Uyghurs living outside of the PRC who  
13          remain in the PRC have gone missing or have been  
14          detained to force Uyghur expatriates to return to  
15          the PRC or silence their dissent.

16          (11) Credible evidence from human rights orga-  
17          nizations, think tanks, and journalists confirms that  
18          more than 1,000,000 Uyghurs and members of other  
19          ethnic groups have been imprisoned in extrajudicial  
20          “political reeducation” centers.

21          (12) Independent accounts from former detain-  
22          ees of “political reeducation” centers describe inhu-  
23          mane conditions and treatment, including forced po-  
24          litical indoctrination, torture, beatings, rape, forced  
25          sterilization, and food deprivation. Former detainees

1 also confirmed that they were told by guards that  
2 the only way to secure release was to demonstrate  
3 sufficient political loyalty to the Chinese Communist  
4 Party.

5 (13) Popular discourse surrounding the ongoing  
6 atrocities in the XUAR and advocacy efforts to as-  
7 sist Uyghurs remains muted in most Muslim major-  
8 ity nations around the world.

9 (14) Both Secretary of State Antony Blinken  
10 and Former Secretary of State Michael Pompeo  
11 have stated that the Chinese Communist Party has  
12 committed genocide and crimes against humanity  
13 against Uyghurs and other ethnic and religious  
14 groups in the XUAR.

15 (15) Government bodies of multiple nations  
16 have also declared that Chinese Communist Party  
17 atrocities against such populations in the XUAR  
18 constitute genocide, including the parliaments of the  
19 United Kingdom, Belgium, Czechia, Lithuania, the  
20 Netherlands, and Canada.

21 **SEC. 3. STATEMENT OF POLICY.**

22 It is the policy of the United States—

23 (1) to press for authorities in China to open the  
24 XUAR to regular, transparent, and unmanipulated  
25 visits by members of the press, Members of Con-

1 gress, congressional staff delegations, and members  
2 and staff of the Congressional-Executive Commis-  
3 sion on the People's Republic of China and the  
4 U.S.–China Economic and Security Review Commis-  
5 sion;

6 (2) to strive to ensure the preservation of the  
7 distinct ethnic, cultural, religious, and linguistic  
8 identity of Uyghurs and members of other ethnic  
9 and religious groups in the XUAR;

10 (3) to urge other nations to call for the ces-  
11 sation of all government-sponsored crackdowns,  
12 imprisonments, and detentions of people throughout  
13 the XUAR aimed at those involved in the peaceful  
14 expression of their ethnic, cultural, political, or reli-  
15 gious identity;

16 (4) to commend countries that have provided  
17 shelter and hospitality to Uyghurs in exile, including  
18 Turkey, Albania, and Germany; and

19 (5) to urge countries with sizeable Muslim pop-  
20 ulations, given commonalities in their religious and  
21 cultural identities, to demonstrate concern over the  
22 plight of Uyghurs.

1 **SEC. 4. PUBLIC DIPLOMACY IN THE ISLAMIC WORLD WITH**  
2 **RESPECT TO THE UYGHUR SITUATION.**

3 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of State, working  
4 through the Assistant Secretary of State for Educational  
5 and Cultural Affairs, shall support, through the United  
6 States Speaker Program, human rights advocates rep-  
7 resenting Uyghurs and members of other ethnic and reli-  
8 gious groups persecuted in the PRC, to speak at public  
9 diplomacy forums in Muslim-majority countries and other  
10 regions about issues regarding the human rights and reli-  
11 gious freedom of Uyghurs and members of other ethnic  
12 and religious groups that are being persecuted in the PRC.

13 (b) CONSULTATION REQUIREMENT.—The Assistant  
14 Secretary of State for Educational and Cultural Affairs  
15 shall consult with representatives of the global Uyghur  
16 community when selecting participants for the activity de-  
17 scribed in subsection (a).

18 (c) MEDIA ACTIVITIES.—The Secretary of State, in  
19 consultation with the Chief Executive Officer of the  
20 United States Agency for Global Media should facilitate  
21 the unhindered dissemination of information to Muslim-  
22 majority countries about issues regarding the human  
23 rights and religious freedom of Uyghurs and members of  
24 other groups in the XUAR.

1 **SEC. 5. STRATEGY TO INCREASE ACCESS TO DETENTION**  
2 **FACILITIES AND PRISONS AND SECURE THE**  
3 **RELEASE OF PRISONERS.**

4 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the  
5 date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of State  
6 shall develop and submit to Congress a strategy to support  
7 and secure the release of political prisoners detained in  
8 the PRC.

9 (b) ELEMENTS.—The strategy required under sub-  
10 section (a) shall include—

11 (1) a detailed description of how the United  
12 States Government can pressure the PRC to imme-  
13 diately close all detention facilities and “political re-  
14 education” camps housing Uyghurs and members of  
15 other ethnic minority groups in the XUAR;

16 (2) a detailed assessment of how the United  
17 States can leverage its contributions to the United  
18 Nations to support the United Nations Commis-  
19 sioner for Human Rights and numerous United Na-  
20 tions Special Rapporteurs’ urgent calls for imme-  
21 diate and unhindered access to detention facilities  
22 and “political reeducation” camps in the XUAR by  
23 independent international organizations and the Of-  
24 fice of the United Nations High Commissioner for  
25 Human Rights for a comprehensive assessment of  
26 the human rights situation;

1           (3) a detailed description of how the United  
2 States Government will work with other like-minded  
3 countries to pressure the PRC to immediately stop  
4 the genocide of Uyghurs and other ethnic groups in  
5 the XUAR; and

6           (4) a detailed plan for how United States Gov-  
7 ernment officials can use meetings with representa-  
8 tives of the Chinese Communist Party to demand  
9 the immediate and unconditional release of all pris-  
10 oners detained for their ethnic, cultural, religious,  
11 and linguistic identities, or for expressing their polit-  
12 ical or religious beliefs in the XUAR.

13       (c) FORM.—The strategy required under subsection  
14 (a) shall be submitted in unclassified form.

15 **SEC. 6. REQUIREMENT FOR UYGHUR LANGUAGE TRAINING.**

16       The Secretary of State shall ensure that—

17           (1) Uyghur language training is available to  
18 Foreign Service officers, as appropriate; and

19           (2) every effort is being made to ensure that a  
20 Uyghur-speaking member of the Foreign Service (as  
21 described in section 103 of the Foreign Service Act  
22 of 1980 (22 U.S.C. 3903)) is assigned to United  
23 States diplomatic and consular missions in the PRC,  
24 Turkey, and other nations hosting Uyghur popu-  
25 lations.

1 **SEC. 7. UYGHUR CONSIDERATIONS AT THE UNITED NA-**  
2 **TIONS.**

3 The Secretary of State and the United States Perma-  
4 nent Representative to the United Nations shall use the  
5 voice, vote, and influence of the United States at the  
6 United Nations—

7 (1) to oppose any efforts—

8 (A) to prevent consideration of the issues  
9 related to the XUAR in any body of the United  
10 Nations; and

11 (B) to prevent the participation of any  
12 Uyghur human rights advocates in nongovern-  
13 mental fora hosted by or otherwise organized  
14 under the auspices of any body of the United  
15 Nations; and

16 (2) to support the appointment of a special  
17 rapporteur or working group for the XUAR for the  
18 purposes of—

19 (A) monitoring human rights violations  
20 and abuses in the XUAR; and

21 (B) making reports available to the High  
22 Commissioner for Refugees, the High Commis-  
23 sioner for Human Rights, the General Assem-  
24 bly, and other United Nations bodies.