

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

December 5, 2019

Mr. Thomas Bach
President, International Olympic Committee
Château de Vidy
Case Postale 356
1001 Lausanne
Switzerland

Dear Mr. Bach:

We write to express support of the International Olympic Committee's Olympic Agenda 2020 and request its immediate full implementation. Specifically, we hold great concern that the People's Republic of China (PRC), a country plagued with violent suppression of free speech, state-sponsored oppression, and human rights abuses, is set to serve as host to the 2022 Olympic Winter Games without proper guidelines or requirements.

For years, host cities have unfortunately committed human rights abuses in accordance with the preparation and conducting of the Olympic Games. In response to these concerning trends, the International Olympic Committee (IOC), in December 2014, unanimously agreed to adopt the Olympic Agenda 2020. This document maintains that Olympic principles are United Nations principles; one reform included in adhering to these international principles is an overhaul to the Host City Contract requirements to be fully implemented by 2024.

The Olympic Agenda 2020 and its corresponding Host City Contract requirements were unanimously adopted seven months prior to the awarding of the 2022 Olympic Games to Beijing, PRC, and the execution of its Host City Contract. As part of the host city selection process, the IOC considers "whether the Games would leave a positive legacy that meets the individual needs and long-term development goals of the respective city and region."¹ Further, the IOC's Olympic Charter holds that "The goal of Olympism is to place sport at the service of the harmonious development of humankind," making the host city a crucial piece of the puzzle.²

Rightfully present in the revised Host City Contract under the Olympic Agenda 2020 is an address of the host city's respect of human rights. These revised Host City Contract requirements include protection of human rights and labor-related protections, as well as the assurance that all violations of human rights, fraud, or acts of corruption are remedied in accordance with applicable international agreements, laws, and regulations.³

¹ *Report of the 2022 Evaluation Commission*. International Olympic Committee. June 1, 2015.

² *Olympic Charter: In Force as from 26 June 2019*. International Olympic Committee. September 2019.

³ *Host City Contract Principles: Games of the XXXIII Olympiad in 2024*. International Olympic Committee. September 13, 2017.

Delaying application of imperative guidelines like these until the 2024 Olympic Games leaves China free reign in 2022. China has made evident their exploitation of human labor and violation of human rights. Two most recent examples are the 403 pages of internal Chinese Communist Party (CCP) documents published by the New York Times outlining the CCP's "ruthless and extraordinary campaign" to organize the mass detention of Uyghur Muslims within its borders⁴ as well as a classified list of guidelines for operating the camps revealed by the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists – both revealed in November 2019.

Furthermore, we also ask that you look to Beijing's past actions when entrusted with the Olympic torch. The Department of State in its annual Report on Human Rights Practices identified a peak in human rights abuses around the 2008 Olympic Games.⁵ This report documents forced relocations linked to Olympic infrastructure construction; mandatory travel abroad or house arrest for political prisoners during the Games; increased surveillance of civil society organizations and suspension of meetings and activities by NGOs; increased harassment of religious groups, including prominent Christian activists; directives to schools and universities regarding guardrails for political and social discourse leading up to and during the Olympics; heightened harassment, detention, and incarceration of dissidents; restrictions on the right to assemble and raise grievances; and other abuses.

Additionally, an international NGO documented – and a Chinese governmental investigation later confirmed – eight cases of child labor utilized by Lekit Stationary Company to produce 2008 Olympics-branded and -licensed goods. These actions clearly all fall out of the bounds of international norms regarding human rights practices and would be in violation of the new Host City Contract requirements.

Host City Contract requirements also include close cooperation between Olympic committees and the host city and its authorities in the areas of media, information and knowledge management, and rights protection. Prior to the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games, Chinese propaganda authorities issued a 21-point directive outlining how domestic media could report on the Olympics, including a ban on reporting on Tibetan and Uyghur movements, a prohibition from noting the lifting of censorship of Western websites just during the time of the Olympics, and a blanket requirement to report positively on Olympic security arrangements.⁶

The Foreign Correspondent's Club of China also noted a spike in the weeks prior and during the Olympics in infringement by local authorities on the freedom of foreign journalists – including the beating of two Japanese journalists, abuse of Hong Kong journalists, and detention of two Finnish journalists as well as other foreign correspondents.

Therefore, we call on the International Olympic Committee to implement the Host City Contract requirements as outlined in the Olympic Agenda 2020 to all contracts applied to Olympic Games occurring after January 1, 2020. We understand that this implementation would apply both to the execution of new Host City Contracts and to the update of existing Host City

⁴ *Exposed: China's Operating Manuals for Mass Internment and Arrest by Algorithm*. International Consortium of Investigative Journalists. November 24, 2019.

⁵ *2008 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices – China (Includes Tibet, Hong Kong, and Macau)*. U.S. Department of State. February 25, 2009.

⁶ *2008 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices – China (Includes Tibet, Hong Kong, and Macau)*. U.S. Department of State. February 25, 2009.

Contracts. These guidelines have been prepared for six years, and were publically available prior to Beijing signing its July 2015 Host City Contract, providing all prospective and current host nations ample time to consider the requirements. Any nation enjoying the opportunity to “promote of its image on the world stage” should be held to the utmost standards of human rights and freedom. The Olympic Games are a shining example of the best that humans can be. We urge you to allow this to be true across all arenas and implement the most current Host City Requirements for each forthcoming Games.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

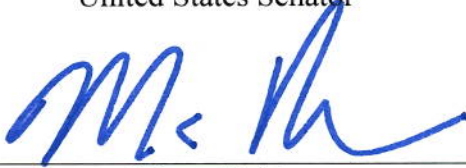
Respectfully,



Marsha Blackburn
United States Senator



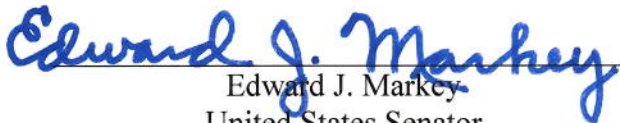
Rick Scott
United States Senator



Marco Rubio
United States Senator



Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator



Edward J. Markey
United States Senator



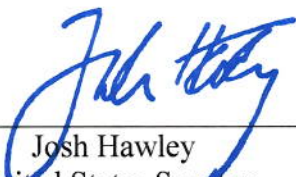
Kevin Cramer
United States Senator



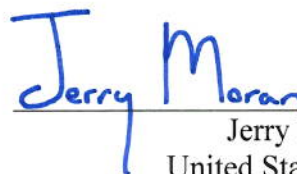
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Josh Hawley
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