

# United States Senate

March 23, 2020

The President  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Ave, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20050

Dear Mr. President,

We write to you requesting the formation of an interagency taskforce under the aegis of the National Security Council (NSC) with the purpose of countering the sinister propaganda campaign emanating from the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). The Asia Reassurance Initiative Act (ARIA) (P.L. No: 115-409), which you signed into law in December 2018, authorizes funding “for United States Government efforts to counter the strategic influence of the People's Republic of China,” developing the foundation for such an initiative.

In early December 2019, citizens of the city of Wuhan, China began experiencing symptoms of what would become known as Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19). This new virus has continuously proved highly infectious and in the four short months since its discovery, it has become a global pandemic and a crisis here at home. Despite early indications that this was a new virus comparable to Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) from 2002, the CCP made concerted efforts to obfuscate and downplay information that would have been critical for the health of their citizens and later the world.

Now that COVID-19 has spread rapidly around the globe, the CCP and its officials have the audacity to spread disingenuous claims that the United States is responsible for this pandemic. This is not simply dishonest, it is dangerous. This tactic, in addition to being a despicable exploitation of a global emergency, threatens to undermine the worldwide coordination necessary to combat this coronavirus. It is for this reason that we request an interagency taskforce within the NSC to counter the malicious propaganda coming from CCP apparatchiks.

This interagency taskforce should include representatives from the Department of State, the Department of Defense (DOD), the Department of Treasury, the Department of Commerce, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), and from agencies within the Intelligence Community. These representatives should work together to disseminate accurate and appropriate information to U.S. Government (USG) employees and the global public at-large concerning the origins of COVID-19 and efforts at national and international levels to halt its spread.

To that end, this taskforce should focus on 1) producing a white paper on the origins of COVID-19 and subsequent CCP efforts to conceal its seriousness, 2) provide guidance to USG employees and

U.S. Embassies on messaging surrounding COVID-19 and methods to counter false CCP narratives around its origins and containment, and 3) regularly coordinate with and brief the appropriate Congressional Committees on these efforts.

The Chinese Communist Party is manipulating facts surrounding a global pandemic that originated due to their own incompetence. While the rest of the world scrambles to clean up the CCP's mess, they continue to seek geopolitical advantage and undermine the U.S. at every turn. It is critical that our country fight back against this propaganda and an interagency taskforce under the aegis of the NSC is a distinctive tool to formulate a coordinated, USG-wide response.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Cory Gardner  
United States Senator



Mitt Romney  
United States Senator



Marco Rubio  
United States Senator