



***For Immediate Release***

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## **New Hong Kong People's Freedom and Choice Act of 2020 Introduced**

*Bipartisan bill set for House Foreign Affairs Committee markup this week.*

WASHINGTON, DC (September 30, 2020) Today, Rep. Tom Malinowski (NJ-7) and Rep. Adam Kinzinger (IL-16) introduced **HR 8428**, the *Hong Kong People's Freedom and Choice Act of 2020*. The bipartisan bill is an updated and streamlined version of a previous proposal introduced earlier this summer and is the result of months of behind-the-scenes hard work and consensus-building by the lawmakers to identify the most impactful and immediate measures the US can take to protect Hong Kongers targeted for fighting for their democratic freedoms.

The bill would ensure that the US government:

- Provides temporary refuge to Hong Kongers already in the US that fear persecution if they returned
- Expedites processing of refugee applications for Hong Kongers fleeing persecution
- Continues to treat Hong Kongers as distinct from mainland China for the purposes of immigration visas for 5 years
- Develops a strategy with allies to coordinate international efforts to provide refuge to Hong Kong's residents fleeing persecution

The bill is set to be considered by the House Foreign Affairs Committee during the upcoming markup this Thursday, October 1 at 10 am ET. HKDC is proud to endorse and support this effort to ensure that no Hong Kongers who face the threat of persecution, whether they are in Hong Kong or already in the US, would be turned away or be forced to return.

**HKDC** releases the following statement from **Samuel Chu**:

"HKDC is proud to support the Hong Kong People's Freedom and Choice Act of 2020 and we are grateful to Rep. Malinowski and Rep. Kinzinger for leading this critical measure and for standing with Hong Kong during this dark moment in the city's history.

The threat activists face and the need for safe refuge is real as illustrated by the recent case of the 12 Hong Kongers who attempted to escape to Taiwan on a boat due to their protest-related charges. They were arrested at sea and are now still detained in Mainland China for over a month without access to lawyers and communications with their families.

This bill will protect the most vulnerable Hong Kong activists – those who are young, played a frontline role in the protest, and face politically motivated arrests and charges. Few among this group have standing, such as a British Nationals (Overseas) passport, or the prerequisite education or wealth to gain status in a third nation currently. By granting admission to the US as refugees or asylees, we will ensure that no Hong Konger in danger would be turned away because of a lack of money or education.

It will also provide temporary protected status and ensure that no Hong Kongers currently in the US who might be prosecuted in Hong Kong for their pro-democracy speech, opinion, or activities, would be forced to return to Hong Kong as long as the threat of persecution remains. Last but not least, the bill will focus on the broadest impact by maintaining Hong Kong's autonomous status for the purposes of immigration visas.

Hong Kong has become the global frontline between the free world and Communist China. The United States must live up to our value and be a refuge for those fleeing oppression while keeping pressure on those in power to liberate Hong Kong once again. We are all Hong Kongers now.”

***Hong Kong Democracy Council (HKDC)** is a Washington, DC-based nonpartisan, nonprofit organization dedicated to preserving Hong Kong's basic freedoms, the rule of law, and autonomy.*

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