



***For Immediate Release***

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**America COMPETES Act of 2022 Incorporates Key Hong Kong Provisions**

*Washington, D.C.* — Yesterday, the House of Representatives introduced the [America COMPETES Act of 2022](#), a comprehensive legislative package designed to better prepare the U.S. for competition with China. In response to the incorporation of key Hong Kong provisions, HKDC issues the following statements.

From HKDC's Executive Director, **Brian Leung**:

"I applaud the bill's **emphasis on the necessity of the U.S. government to offer humanitarian pathways for Hong Kongers** who fear political persecution. While the Hong Kong community in the U.S. regrets that the Hong Kong People's Freedom and Choice Act of 2020 failed to become law, we welcome the inclusion of its core provisions in the America COMPETES Act of 2022 now. The potential for additional Hong Kongers — who may not have qualified for President Biden's Deferred Enforced Departure last August — to receive **Temporary Protected Statuses** will be hugely important, as are **high-skilled labor visas** designated for Hong Kongers."

"The bill, too, rightly notes that Beijing has taken advantage of the Covid-19 pandemic to intensify its crackdown on Hong Kong through the National Security Law, leading to the mass arrests of opposition leaders, the effective decimation of press freedom, and numerous other breaches of the 1984 Sino-British Joint Declaration. Indeed, the **promotion of democracy and internet freedom** in Hong Kong, through funding and programs devoted to such causes, is indispensable to confronting Chinese authoritarianism."

From HKDC's Policy and Research Fellow, **Jeffrey Ngo**:

"To introduce the America COMPETES Act of 2022 just **days before the Winter Olympic Games**, which the Biden Administration will diplomatically boycott, are set to commence in Beijing suggests that **policymakers in Washington take the challenge posed by China in the 21st century seriously**, be it economic, geopolitical, or ideological. As always, I thank Speaker Nancy Pelosi for her leadership on this issue. I look forward to the bill's swift passage so the next likely step of the legislative process toward a sweeping, bipartisan China law — setting up a conference with the U.S. Innovation and Competition Act, which the Senate already passed — can begin as soon as possible. HKDC remains committed to **promoting the interests of Hong Kongers in Congress.**"

## Key Hong Kong Provisions in the **America COMPETES Act of 2022**:

### *Safe Haven Policies*

- Provides Temporary Protected Status (TPS) and refugee status for qualifying Hong Kong residents for 18 months.
- Provides special immigrant status admission for certain priority highly-skilled Hong Kong residents, up to 5,000 per year for five fiscal years.
- Stipulates that Hong Kong will continue to be considered a foreign state separate and apart from the PRC for purposes of the numerical limitations on immigrant visas.

### *Reporting Requirements*

- Directs the Secretary of State and the Secretary of Homeland Security, in consultation with other federal agencies, to submit a report detailing the number of Hong Kong residents who have applied for U.S. visas or immigration benefits; the number of approvals, denials, or rejections of applicants for visas or immigration benefits; the number of pending refugee and asylum applications for Hong Kong residents, and the length of time and reason for which such applications have been pending.
- Directs the Secretary of State and the Secretary of Homeland Security to report on refugee and asylum related matters related to Hong Kong applications, average wait-times, approvals, referrals, denials, and refugee circuit rides to interview populations that would include those from Hong Kong.

### *Funding and Programs*

- Authorizes \$10 million for the State Department's Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor to promote democracy in Hong Kong.
- Authorizes the Secretary of State to establish a Hong Kong Internet Freedom Program to develop a strategy to bolster internet resiliency and online access in Hong Kong.
- Authorizes the President of the Open Technology Fund to establish a Hong Kong Internet Freedom Program.
- Authorizes \$10 million to the Open Technology Fund and \$20 million to the DRL's Office of Internet Freedom Programs.

***Hong Kong Democracy Council (HKDC)*** is a Washington, D.C.-based nonpartisan, nonprofit organization for Hong Kong's pro-democracy movement and Hong Kongers in the United States.

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