

# Congress of the United States

## House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

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May 6, 2024

The Honorable Antony Blinken  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of State  
2201 C St. NW  
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Secretary Blinken:

The Chinese Communist Party's (CCP or the Party) persecution of religious and ethnic groups is not limited to the People's Republic of China (PRC) itself.<sup>1</sup> Simply put, "Chinese Communist espionage in the West is notorious and has not spared the church."<sup>2</sup> As part of a broad investigation into the work federal agencies are doing to protect Americans from CCP political warfare,<sup>3</sup> the Committee on Oversight and Accountability (Committee) is investigating CCP interference with religion and religious freedom in America, and what the State Department (State or the Department) is doing to ensure strong leadership within the Department vis-a-vis the PRC.

### Broader Committee Investigation

The Committee is conducting oversight of the federal government's work to protect the American people from CCP "political warfare"<sup>4</sup> and nefarious influence operations. For

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<sup>1</sup> See, e.g., *The Chinese Communist Party's Transnational Repression Targeting Falun Gong* (2023) (written statement of Levi Browde, Executive Director of the Falun Dafa Information Center) ("CCP-backed individuals or misinformed Chinese nationals have physically assaulted Falun Gong practitioners in the United States and other countries who were trying to raise awareness about violations of freedom of belief in China; in several recent cases, the attackers have faced prosecution for their actions.").

<sup>2</sup> Nina Shea, *Pope Xi: How the Vatican capitulated to the Chinese Communist Party*, Hudson Institute (Nov. 9, 2023).

<sup>3</sup> Political warfare "seeks to influence emotions, motives, objective reasoning, and behavior of foreign governments, organizations, groups, and individuals in a manner favorable to one's own political-military objectives." Mark Stokes, Project 2049, *The People's Liberation Army General Political Department: Political Warfare with Chinese Characteristics* (Oct. 14, 2013).

<sup>4</sup> "Political warfare seeks to influence emotions, motives, objective reasoning, and behavior of foreign governments, organizations, groups, and individuals in a manner favorable to one's own political-military objectives." Mark Stokes, *The People's Liberation Army General Political Department: Political Warfare with Chinese Characteristics*, Project 2049 Inst. (Oct. 14, 2013).

decades, the CCP has sought to infiltrate and influence every aspect of American society.<sup>5</sup> The CCP's goal is plain: defeat the “main enemy,” which counterintelligence officials have identified as America.<sup>6</sup> The fronts are multiple; according to the CCP itself: “[t]he battlefield will be everywhere.”<sup>7</sup> And the tools are myriad, with the “united front”<sup>8</sup> leading as one of the PRC's<sup>9</sup> “magic weapons,”<sup>10</sup> as described by General Secretary Xi Jinping,<sup>11</sup> to advance the Party's aim of global domination.<sup>12</sup> United front work (UFW), which may be executed by the United Front Work Department (UFWD) or elsewhere in the Party, is a “unique blend of engagement, influence activities, and intelligence operations” that the CCP uses to “influence other countries' policy toward the PRC and to gain access to advanced foreign technology.”<sup>13</sup> UFW “generally involves covert activity and is a form of interference that aids the CCP's rise.”<sup>14</sup> United front “networks” are used “to carry out relationship-focused influence campaigns through a multitude of proxies.”<sup>15</sup>

Despite years of false promises to the West, the CCP openly seeks to achieve its destructive ambition. In 1999, two People's Liberation Army Air Force colonels authored *Unrestricted Warfare*, which has been described as a strategic military vision for the PRC to defeat America through political warfare.<sup>16</sup> Retired Brig. Gen. Robert Spalding, who has served in senior positions in strategy and diplomacy with the U.S. Departments of Defense and State for decades, characterizes the book as “the main blueprint for China's efforts to unseat America as the world's economy, political, and ideological leader,” which “shows exactly how a totalitarian nation set out to dominate the West through a comprehensive, long-term strategy that includes everything from corporate sabotage to cyberwarfare to dishonest diplomacy; from violations of international trade law and intellectual property law to calculated abuses of the global financial

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<sup>5</sup> See generally Constantine C. Menges, *China The Gathering Threat* (2005); H.R. Rep. No. 105-851 (1999) (“Cox Report”); Robert Spalding, *War Without Rules* (2022); Col. Grant Newsham, *When China Attacks: A Warning to America* (2023); Kerry K. Gershaneck, *Political Warfare: Strategies for Combating China's Plan to “Win without Fighting”* (2020); see also Larry Diamond and Orville Schell, *China's Influence & America's Interests: Promoting Constructive Vigilance*, Hoover Inst. (2019).

<sup>6</sup> Menges, *supra* note 5; Gershaneck, *supra* note 5 (“The PRC is engaged in war against the United States. It is not mere competition or malign influence, but war by PRC definition.”); Newsham, *supra* note 5, at 60 (The CCP “seeks global domination” and “will fight its main enemy, the United States, to achieve it.”).

<sup>7</sup> Qiao Liang & Wang Xiangsu, *Unrestricted Warfare: China's Master Plan to Destroy America* (PLA Lit. & Arts Pub. House 1999) (China) (military colonels describing twenty-four varieties of warfare).

<sup>8</sup> “While the CCP's United Front Work Department has functional responsibility for these [warfare] operations and activities, PRC united front work is a task of all CCP agencies and members.” Gershaneck, *supra* note 5, at 22.

<sup>9</sup> It is essential to understand that Xi Jinping has removed any “veneer of separation between the [CCP] and the Chinese state.” Gershaneck, *supra* note x, at 43 (quoting Ann-Marie Brady, *Exploit Every Rift: United Front Work Goes Global*, in David Gitter et al., *Party Watch Annual Report*, Ctr. for Adv. China Res. (2018)).

<sup>10</sup> Ann-Marie Brady, *Magic Weapons: China's political influence activities under Xi Jinping*, Wilson Ctr. (Sept. 18, 2017); see also Sel. Comm. on the Chinese Communist Party, *Memorandum: United Front 101*, at 7 (“United Front 101 Memo”).

<sup>11</sup> Alex Joske, *The party speaks for you: Foreign interference and the Chinese Communist Party's united front system*, Austl. Strategic Pol'y Inst. (Jun. 09, 2020) (quoting Xi Jinping at 2015 Central United Front Work Meeting).

<sup>12</sup> See, e.g., Newsham, *supra* note 5, at 43 (“The People's Republic of China may settle for dominance rather than occupation, but it does indeed aim to rule us all.”).

<sup>13</sup> United Front 101 Memo, *supra* note 10, at 1.

<sup>14</sup> Joske, *The party speaks for you*, *supra* note 11, at 19.

<sup>15</sup> Alex Joske, *Spies and Lies: How China's Greatest Covert Operations Fooled the World*, at 63 (2022).

<sup>16</sup> Gershaneck, *supra* note 5.

system.”<sup>17</sup> Kerry Gershaneck, former counterintelligence officer who wrote a seminal book on combatting PRC Political Warfare, has explained that *Unrestricted Warfare* details CCP use of “any methods” where “the boundaries between war and non-war and between military and non-military affairs [have] systemically broken down.”<sup>18</sup> To successfully combat these highly organized and pervasive warfares spawned by China, federal agencies must first recognize and understand them.

The CCP “know[s] the strength of the American people, of the American idea, and that’s why China has launched so many warfares to try to weaken us, divide us, and get us to hate ourselves and each other.”<sup>19</sup> Retired Col. Grant Newsham, former U.S. Marine Liaison Officer to the Japan Ground Self-Defense Force and U.S. Foreign Service Officer, has advised that “the way out of this is to rediscover why we are an exceptional country, get to know each other better, and fight side by side.”<sup>20</sup>

As all Americans are targets of the PRC’s warfare,<sup>21</sup> federal agencies have responsibilities to (1) conduct outreach to citizens about the dangers they may encounter, and (2) provide appropriate incentives for Americans to proactively protect themselves—their communities, schools, houses of worship, businesses, finances, food, and more—from the threat. Federal agencies must prepare Americans to “take action.”<sup>22</sup> To stop the CCP’s “destructive actions,” retired Brig. Gen. Spalding advises that it will “take macrolevel strategic changes by our government, but also microlevel actions by individuals, businesses and other civic institutions.”<sup>23</sup> The Committee is surveying each agency’s role to secure Americans and their communities.

Congress has recognized the threat posed by the PRC for some time. Notably, in 1999, the U.S. House Select Committee on U.S. National Security and Military/Commercial Concerns with the People’s Republic of China concluded that in the preceding decade, the PRC used a “variety of techniques including espionage, controlled commercial entities, and a network of

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<sup>17</sup> Spalding, *War Without Rules*, *supra* note 5, at xii; *see also* Robert Spalding, *Stealth War*, at 12-13 (2019) (*Unrestricted Warfare* “should be required reading for all branches of the US government and for business leaders, because it outlines, in no uncertain terms, the strategy behind China’s policies,” including stating that the “new principles of war” are “no longer ‘using armed force to compel the enemy to submit to one’s will,’ but rather are ‘using all means, including armed force or non-armed force, military and non-military, and lethal and non-lethal means to compel the enemy to accept one’s interests.’”).

<sup>18</sup> Gershaneck, *supra* note 5, at 16 (quoting Qiao Liang & Wang Xiangsu, *supra* note 7, at 6-7).

<sup>19</sup> Newsham, *supra* note 5, at 341.

<sup>20</sup> *Id.*

<sup>21</sup> “The Three Warfares, the traditional foundation of PRC political warfare, include public opinion/media warfare, psychological warfare, and legal warfare.” Gershaneck, *supra* note 5. It “requires efforts to unify military and civilian thinking, divide the enemy into factions, weaken the enemy’s combat power, and organize legal offensives.” Elsa Kania, *China Brief: The PLA’s Latest Strategic Thinking on the Three Warfares*, Jamestown Found. (Aug. 22, 2016).

<sup>22</sup> Spalding, *War Without Rules*, *supra* note 5, at 214.

<sup>23</sup> *Id.*; *see also* Peter Mattis & Matt Schrader, *America Can’t Beat Beijing’s Tech Theft With Racial Profiling*, War on the Rocks (July 23, 2019) (“The U.S. government’s difficulties in telling a convincing story about the Chinese Communist Party point to a[n] important step: addressing a serious lack of ‘China literacy,’ both within the enforcement portions of the federal bureaucracy, and in U.S. society as a whole.”).

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individuals that engage in contact with scientists, business people and academics” as part of its warfare operations.<sup>24</sup>

With varying degrees of effort and success, federal agencies have sought to address the CCP’s attack on what Col. Newsham has aptly described as “[t]he core of America.”<sup>25</sup> However, the threat is grave and work must be done across agencies to protect America.<sup>26</sup> Peter Mattis, former staff director of the Congressional-Executive Commission of China and counterintelligence analyst at the CIA counsels that

Only by being clear in public about the actions and intentions of the Chinese party-state, and being publicly accountable for the actions the U.S. government takes in response, will the United States be able to address Beijing’s challenges while upholding our democratic commitment to fair, transparent justice for all Americans.<sup>27</sup>

To this end, the Committee is conducting this investigation and implores each federal agency to uphold its duty to the American communities for whom they are responsible.

### CCP Influence Operations in American Religious Communities

The CCP “insist[s] on the sinicization of Chinese religions” so that religion and socialism “coexist” in America and around the world.<sup>28</sup> For example, the CCP recently launched a 10-year project to rewrite the Bible and other religious texts for Chinese audiences to discourage dissidents from challenging the Party.<sup>29</sup> Importantly, this campaign could eventually affect the Bibles and other religious texts that the PRC exports to America given that most of our nation’s Bibles are printed in China.<sup>30</sup> America’s largest Bible publishing companies are responsible for printing more than 20 million Protestant and Catholic Bibles each year, and most of these are printed in the PRC.<sup>31</sup> This makes Americans’ sacred texts vulnerable to manipulation by the CCP.

Additionally, CCP oppression of religious groups in the PRC poses significant risks to practitioners in America, given that practitioners belong to or participate in religious groups and institutions that are united globally. The Department’s Office of International Religious Freedom (IRF Office), which engages with domestic and international faith-based actors, organizations, and communities, has an important role in conducting outreach to religious institutions in

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<sup>24</sup> Cox Report, *supra* note 5, at xxxiii; *see generally* Menges, *supra* note 5.

<sup>25</sup> Newsham, *supra* note 5, at 33.

<sup>26</sup> *See* Newsham, *supra* note 5, at 309 (“We need to know, value, protect and build the strengths of the United States of America, and shed the light of truth on the corruption, in every sense of the word,” of the CCP. “That could mean in discussions with family, community, at school or wherever that understanding needs bolstering.” Education courses on PRC political warfare would benefit “[a]ny decision-makers who work with China.”); *see* Gershaneck, *supra* note 5, at 153 (outlining such courses to “build[] internal defenses”).

<sup>27</sup> Mattis and Schrader, *supra* note 23.

<sup>28</sup> Mike Gallagher, *The Chinese Communist Party is rewriting the Bible*, Fox News (July 17, 2023).

<sup>29</sup> *See generally* *Id.* (CCP officials in the Henan province recently required Protestant churches “to replace the Ten Commandments with Xi Jinping quotes.”).

<sup>30</sup> Nina Shea, *China’s Threat to the Bible*, First Things (Dec. 22, 2020).

<sup>31</sup> *Id.*

America (and the public at large) about the CCP's interference efforts.<sup>32</sup> One example is the Catholic Church—based in Vatican City and with approximately 62 million practitioners in the United States<sup>33</sup>—which the Party has directly sought to influence. In 2018, the Catholic Church accepted the CCP's selection of Catholic bishops operating in China, as opposed to that of the Vatican.<sup>34</sup> CCP influence operations do not end there; Catholic bishops are also allegedly encouraged and expected to avoid public discussion of the PRC's religious repression, especially towards the Catholic Church.<sup>35</sup> Additionally, the Party has attempted to interfere with the sacred Tibetan Buddhist selection of the next Dalai, which affects practitioners in America and around the globe.<sup>36</sup> The CCP also purportedly backed a Buddhist group that harassed the Dalai Lama around the world, including in the U.S., for the purpose of discrediting the Dalai Lama.<sup>37</sup>

CCP infiltration has reached American soil with the intent of influencing policy decisions through religious groups. For example, recent reports allege that the Party has fostered relationships with figures inside the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (LDS) in an attempt to influence government actions inside the U.S.<sup>38</sup> Following outreach, some Utah lawmakers affiliated with the church reportedly delayed or dropped legislation opposed by the PRC, including legislation conveying disapproval of the CCP.<sup>39</sup> The Associated Press reports that in turn, the CCP presents these relationships and interactions with American politicians and elites as if they constitute American support for the CCP.<sup>40</sup>

The State Department recognized the dangers of CCP political warfare when it cancelled the 2020 U.S.-China National Governors Forum (Forum) in Salt Lake City due to concerns regarding its PRC-based sponsor, the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries (CPAFFC).<sup>41</sup> The Department withdrew the U.S. from a formal agreement supporting the Forum because CPAFFC, the PRC's mechanism for developing and maintaining "sister" relationships with local governments in the U.S. and other nations, acted in a manner that

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<sup>32</sup> U.S. State Dep't, Engaging Faith-Based Actors on Shared Goals: Our Work, *available at* <https://www.state.gov/engaging-with-religious-actors/>; *see* @StateIRF, Twitter (Nov. 30, 2023, 3:59 PM), <https://twitter.com/StateIRF/status/1730330615268991211>.

<sup>33</sup> Kevin J. Jones, *U.S. Catholic population shows growth, trends southward*, Catholic News Agency (Dec. 6, 2022).

<sup>34</sup> Shea, *supra* note 2.

<sup>35</sup> *Id.*

<sup>36</sup> *See* Gallagher, *supra* note 28.

<sup>37</sup> David Lague & Stephanie Nebehay, *Group that hounded Dalai Lama disbands after Reuters exposes Chinese Backing*, Reuters (Mar. 11, 2016) (Members of the International Shugden Community (ISC) are part of a sect of Buddhism that worships Dorje Shugden. The Dalai Lama previously discouraged this worship based on his conclusion that the deity is a harmful spirit. Members of the ISC have protested the Dalai Lama in the U.S., including during a visit to Madison, Wisconsin. A media report revealed that an internal CCP document concluded that Shugden was "an important front in our struggle with the Dalai clique.").

<sup>38</sup> Thomas Kika, *China Using Mormon Church to Influence U.S. Politics, Investigation Finds*, Newsweek (Mar. 27, 2023).

<sup>39</sup> *Id.*

<sup>40</sup> Alan Suderman & Sam Metz, *Amid strained ties with U.S., China finds unlikely friend — in Utah*, Associated Press (Mar. 27, 2023).

<sup>41</sup> Suderman & Metz, *supra* note 40; Press Release, Office of the Dir. of Nat'l Intelligence, The Nat'l Counterintelligence and Sec. Ctr., *Protecting Government and Business Leaders at the U.S. State and Local Level from People's Republic of China (PRC) Influence Operations* (July 2022) (citing Press Release, U.S. Dep't of State, *Designation of the National Association for China's Peaceful Unification (NACPU) as a Foreign Mission of the PRC*) (Oct. 28, 2020).

“undermined the Governors Forum’s original well-intentioned purpose.”<sup>42</sup> Specifically, State described CPAFFC as “a Beijing-based organization tasked with co-opting subnational governments” which “has sought to directly and malignly influence state and local leaders to promote the PRC’s global agenda.”<sup>43</sup> The CCP seeks to use these manipulative tactics against religious, ethnic, and civic groups around the U.S.

In September 2023, the State Department’s Global Engagement Center (GEC) released a report which concluded that, “[u]nchecked, the PRC’s efforts will reshape the global information landscape, creating biases and gaps that could even lead nations to make decisions that subordinate their economic and security interests to Beijing’s.”<sup>44</sup> The GEC coordinates with the federal government to “recognize, understand, expose, and counter” foreign propaganda and manipulation of information that is “aimed at undermining or influencing the policies, security, or stability of the United States, its allies, and partner nations.”<sup>45</sup> The Committee endeavors to ascertain what the GEC, and more broadly the Department, is doing to protect Americans from CCP interference. Any such efforts by the GEC and State must, of course, comply with the First Amendment and should not in any way attempt to serve as a government censor or an arbiter of “truth” amongst Americans.<sup>46</sup>

The State Department must be cognizant of CCP interference and influence in all areas and must not be deferential to the CCP. The CCP’s infiltration of particular American communities is not always obvious. This is because “the CCP does not simply direct the behavior of the willing—it conditions behavior.”<sup>47</sup> Referencing personal experiences from presentations and meetings with U.S. embassy foreign service officers, senior U.S. diplomats, and Foreign Service Institute instructors, political warfare expert Gershaneck identified several instances in which important State Department officials exhibited deference to the CCP and were inattentive to the CCP’s political warfare operations.<sup>48</sup> For example, the State Department mistakenly designated the East Turkestan Islamic Movement (ETIM), a Muslim separatist group founded by Uighurs, as a terrorist organization in 2002 during “a period of increased U.S.-Chinese cooperation on antiterrorism” following September 11, 2001.<sup>49</sup> Former Secretary Mike Pompeo revoked this designation in 2020 due to the lack of evidence that ETIM continues to

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<sup>42</sup> Press Release, *supra* note 41.

<sup>43</sup> *Id.*

<sup>44</sup> U.S. State Dep’t, *How the People’s Republic of China Seeks to Reshape the Global Information Environment* (2023), at 4.

<sup>45</sup> U.S. State Dep’t, Global Engagement Center, <https://www.state.gov/bureaus-offices/under-secretary-for-public-diplomacy-and-public-affairs/global-engagement-center/> (last visited Apr. 29, 2024).

<sup>46</sup> *See generally* Gave Kaminsky, *Disinformation Inc: Congress receives classified briefing on conservative blacklist group*, *Washington Examiner* (Mar. 2, 2023) (in 2021, the GEC granted \$100,000 to the Global Disinformation Index, a foreign organization that has censored conservative American outlets); *see generally* Margot Cleveland, *Meet the Shadowy Group That Ran the Federal Government’s Censorship Scheme*, *The Federalist* (Apr. 19, 2023) (the “Twitter Files” revealed that several federal agencies, including State’s GEC, actively worked with social media companies to censor speech, and the GEC has funded censorship products and used federal employees to “act as sales reps pitching the censoring products to Big Tech.”).

<sup>47</sup> Gershaneck, *supra* note 5, at XIV-XVI.

<sup>48</sup> *See generally Id.* (Gershaneck also describes instances in which U.S. embassy foreign service officers appeared agitated, “neared hysteria and, in one case, became teary-eyed,” and “frantically” tried to end Gershaneck’s presentation on PRC political warfare.).

<sup>49</sup> Beina Xu et. al, *The East Turkestan Islamic Movement (ETIM)*, Council on Foreign Relations (Sept. 4, 2014).

exist, after years of the CCP blaming ETIM for attacks to justify the PRC's treatment of Uighurs.<sup>50</sup>

### Top-Down Leadership To Protect America From CCP Political & Psychological Warfare

High-ranking State Department officials have important responsibilities in the battle against CCP political and psychological warfare.<sup>51</sup> They should be prudent when engaging with and traveling to the PRC and avoid actions that may seem to minimize known risks. In June 2023, Secretary Blinken traveled to Beijing for meetings with President Xi Jinping and other high-ranking CCP officials.<sup>52</sup> During the visit, Secretary Blinken stated that he simultaneously “welcomed strengthening people-to-people exchanges between students, scholars, and businesses.”<sup>53</sup> More recently, the U.S. ambassador to China, Nicholas Burns, visited Harbin, a city in the PRC known for the Harbin Ice and Snow World in Northeast China.<sup>54</sup> Ambassador Burns posted several photos in Harbin, showcasing the festival and other tourist destinations, but made no mention of the risks associated with travel to the PRC.<sup>55</sup> Yet, the Ambassador has been targeted directly, as his email was breached by PRC-based hackers mere months before this visit.<sup>56</sup> Similarly, the Committee continues to investigate the office of the Special Presidential Envoy for Climate (SPEC) with concerns that the current SPEC Envoy, John Kerry, enjoyed a non-Senate confirmed Cabinet-level position and seat at the National Security Council, allowing Kerry to freely engage with the CCP in negotiating climate policy.<sup>57</sup> All senior State officials should be properly informed and trained about PRC non-physical warfare tactics.<sup>58</sup> Further,

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<sup>50</sup> *Id.*; AFP, *US removes shadowy group from terror list blamed by China for attacks*, The Guardian (Nov. 6, 2020); see U.S. State Dep't, 2020 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices: China (Includes Hong Kong, Macau, and Tibet) (2021), at 1.

<sup>51</sup> Col. Newsham has explained that “[u]ltimately, psychological warfare is the most important of the political warfare techniques.” Specifically, it “seeks to change an opponent’s thinking and behavior in a way that is favorable to PRC interests and objectives. Through non-kinetic means, it aims to weaken the opponent’s will and ability to resist. Successful Chinese psychological warfare makes the other side more accommodating and less willing or able to resist.” Newsham, *supra* note 5, at 64.

<sup>52</sup> Press Release, U.S. State Dep't, Secretary Blinken’s Visit to the People’s Republic of China (PRC) (June 19, 2023).

<sup>53</sup> *Id.*

<sup>54</sup> Ambassador Nicholas Burns (@USAmbChina), X, (Feb. 3, 2024, 9:53AM), available at <https://twitter.com/USAmbChina/status/1753793930338976175?s=20>; Ambassador Nicholas Burns (@USAmbChina), X, (Feb. 3, 2024, 4:40PM), available at <https://twitter.com/usambchina/status/1753896188242190741?s=42>.

<sup>55</sup> *Id.*

<sup>56</sup> Shannon K. Crawford & John Haworth, *US ambassador to China and high level diplomat in East Asia targeted in recent cyberattack: Sources*, ABC News (July 21, 2023).

<sup>57</sup> Letter from James Comer, Chairman, H. Comm. on Oversight & Accountability, to John Kerry, Special Presidential Envoy (Feb. 2, 2023); Press Release, H. Comm. on Oversight & Accountability, Comer Probes John Kerry’s Secret Negotiations as Special Presidential Envoy for Climate (Feb. 2, 2023).

<sup>58</sup> As former Assistant Secretary of State for the Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs and 35-year Air Force veteran Brigadier General David Stilwell explained, “if we’re going to fix one thing in all this, it’s the frequent turnover in our system” because it results in individuals, including politically-appointed individuals, who “don’t come to the job with sufficient history, background experience, to know how to negotiate with their Chinese counterparts,” and these counterparts serve for decades in the same position. Thus, a decrease in turnover and

officials should not encourage or recommend tourism to the PRC without acknowledging the inherent risks to an individual's physical and data security known by the State Department.<sup>59</sup>

State and all federal agencies have resources available to address these internal challenges. In his book on PRC political warfare, Gershaneck recommends that the State Department (and all federal agencies) establish compulsory education programs regarding PRC political warfare for government workers, federal contractors, and students at U.S. government education institutions, as well as offer voluntary public information programs to the private sector and civic groups.<sup>60</sup> These courses would focus on “building internal defenses within the most highly valued PRC target audiences: elected officials, senior policy makers, thought leaders, national security managers, and other information gatekeepers.”<sup>61</sup>

To assist the Committee in investigating this matter, we request a briefing from the State Department with Committee staff. Please contact Committee staff as soon as possible, but no later than May 13, 2024. The briefing should include information on actions the Department, including the Office of International Religious Freedom and the GEC, are undertaking to protect Americans from CCP infiltration of religious, ethnic, and civic groups, as well as any other communities targeted by the PRC. The briefing should also address the following:

1. How the State Department strives to inspire and equip Americans to strengthen their communities, innovate, and create the technologies and phenomena that will secure a strong and prosperous future for our nation;
2. How State Department leadership ensures from the top down that all State employees are aware of CCP warfare and influence operations against America, and are equipped to address them wherever they arise;
3. State Department's outreach to Americans, including Chinese Americans, on the CCP's efforts to infiltrate and influence religious, ethnic, and civic communities in the U.S.;
4. State Department engagement with domestic faith-based actors regarding the CCP's attempts to influence and infiltrate religious communities in the U.S.;
5. State Department's collaboration with other federal agencies to conduct outreach to Americans on the CCP's influence and infiltration tactics in U.S. religious and ethnic communities;
6. State Department advice and guidance to federal and state – executive, legislative, and judicial – government officials, civic groups, associations, and select professions

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increase in training may help inform senior State officials to better protect American interests. *See generally EWC Insights: China Seminar featuring Brig. Gen. David R. Stilwell*, held by the East-West Center (Nov. 4, 2021).

<sup>59</sup> See U.S. State Dep't, *China Travel Advisory* (June 30, 2023); *see also* Morgan Ortagus & David Stilwell, *The risks Americans face in traveling to China*, CNN Opinion (Oct. 26, 2021).

<sup>60</sup> Gershaneck, *supra* note 5, at 153.

<sup>61</sup> *Id.*



- such as journalists, regarding the motivation behind invitations to study tours of the PRC and the risks associated with such tours, including to personal safety, data security, and influence;
7. State Department's utilization of diplomats and China experts within the Office of China Coordination ("China House")<sup>62</sup> to educate all levels of the State Department regarding PRC political warfare tactics;
  8. The current number of sister city relationships with the PRC, justification for continuing sister city relationships despite evidence suggesting that these relationships are improperly used by the CCP to promote its global agenda, and information regarding the Department's efforts to conduct outreach to local governments engaged in these relationships;
  9. GEC's efforts to prevent censorship of online communities discussing or criticizing CCP political warfare, influence, or interference tactics in America;
  10. A description of all existing memoranda of understanding (MOUs) between the State Department and the PRC and Chinese-owned entities, particularly agreements regarding the sending of U.S. delegations to the PRC, including but not limited to the following:
    - a. The legal team's justification for establishing the aforementioned MOUs;
    - b. The parties to these MOUs;
    - c. The purpose of these MOUs;
  11. The total number of dual-nationality citizens who currently cannot leave China;
  12. Whether the State Department has considered raising the travel advisory to the PRC to the highest level;
  13. State Department efforts to ensure the principle of reciprocity is appropriately applied against the PRC where appropriate to advance American interests; and
  14. State Department efforts to ensure that visas are denied or revoked to Chinese citizens on appropriate foreign policy grounds as provided for in Immigration and Nationality Act § 212(a)(3)(C), 8 U.S.C § 1182(a)(3)(C).

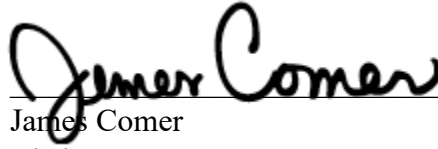
Please contact Committee staff at (202) 225-5074 to schedule the staff briefing. The Committee on Oversight and Accountability is the principal oversight committee of the U.S. House of Representatives and has broad authority to investigate "any matter" at "any time" under House Rule X. Thank you for your prompt attention to this important investigation.

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<sup>62</sup> Press Release, *Secretary Blinken Launches the Office of China Coordination*, U.S. Dep't of State (Dec. 16, 2022).

The Honorable Antony Blinken  
May 6, 2024  
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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "James Comer". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent "C".

James Comer  
Chairman  
Committee on Oversight and Accountability

cc: The Honorable Jamie B. Raskin, Ranking Member  
Committee on Oversight and Accountability