

# Congress of the United States

Washington, D.C. 20515

February 17, 2021

President Joseph R. Biden  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Biden:

We write to urge you to resubmit the previously proposed rule regarding Confucius Institute reporting without delay. Addressing the generational threat of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) is a preeminent national security concern for the United States. As you recently stated, “If we don’t get moving, they’re going to eat our lunch.”<sup>1</sup> We welcome your administration’s first steps towards acknowledging that the CCP threat ultimately derives from hostility to our core democratic values and attempts to legitimize its own authoritarian system, which is rooted in Marxist-Leninist doctrine. In your first call with General Secretary Xi Jinping, you specifically mentioned protecting the American people’s “way of life,” which we support. The CCP’s genocide against the Uyghurs and other ethnic and religious minorities demonstrates what little regard they hold for the value of human life and inherent rights.<sup>2</sup> Among the multitude of threats we face stemming from China, the CCP’s abuse of America’s academic system to steal sensitive research and technology, limit free expression, and propagandize our students is of particular concern.

Confucius Institutes (CIs) are one element of this threat to American academia. CIs are created through contractual arrangements between institutions of higher, primary, or secondary education and the Chinese Government’s Office of Chinese Language Council International (Hanban), ostensibly to promote cultural and language programming between the two countries.<sup>3</sup> In reality, the presence of CIs on a campus can compromise academic freedom, impose contractual arrangements subject to CCP-made laws, censor information on behalf of the CCP, and cause conflicts of interest for school administrators.<sup>4</sup> In 2009, a CCP Politburo Standing Committee Member and “ideology czar” said the CIs, “are an important part of China’s overseas propaganda set-up.”<sup>5</sup> Disappointingly, CI’s currently operate on at least 60 U.S. college

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.foxbusiness.com/politics/biden-china-economic-threat-xi-jinping-campaign-2019>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/features/uyghurs/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.hsgac.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/PSI%20Report%20China's%20Impact%20on%20the%20US%20Education%20System.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2018/01/16/how-china-infiltrated-us-classrooms-216327>

campuses and in approximately 500 Confucius Classrooms in grade schools and high schools across the United States.<sup>6</sup>

The previous administration took action to bring to light the extent to which academic institutions enter into contracts, partnerships, or other financial arrangements with CIs.<sup>7</sup> Specifically, the executive branch proposed a rule requiring all institutions that participate in the Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) to disclose contracts with CIs. This rule appears to have been withdrawn. While we understand that the rule was not finalized under the prior administration and its withdrawal may have been pursuant to a larger review of pending rulemaking, the integrity of the U.S. academic system should be a priority, and we urge your administration to resubmit the rule as soon as possible. We would likewise welcome engaging with your administration to forge bipartisan, whole-of-government solutions to CCP threats to U.S. education and research integrity.

We look forward to your response. Please send your response to Bryan Burack ([bryan.burack@mail.house.gov](mailto:bryan.burack@mail.house.gov)) at the House Foreign Affairs Committee, Alex Ricci ([alex.ricci@mail.house.gov](mailto:alex.ricci@mail.house.gov)) at the House Committee on Education and Labor, and Emily Trapani ([emily.trapani@mail.house.gov](mailto:emily.trapani@mail.house.gov)) at the House Committee on Homeland Security.

Sincerely,



Kevin McCarthy  
House Republican Leader



Virginia Foxx  
Republican Leader  
House Committee on Education and Labor



Michael McCaul  
Republican Leader  
House Foreign Affairs Committee



John Katko  
Republican Leader  
House Committee on Homeland Security

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<sup>6</sup> [https://www.nas.org/blogs/article/how\\_many\\_confucius\\_institutes\\_are\\_in\\_the\\_united\\_states](https://www.nas.org/blogs/article/how_many_confucius_institutes_are_in_the_united_states)

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.axios.com/trump-chinese-funding-education-c34e3b73-0ec9-4e4c-ad30-fc183fa7f958.html>