

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden  
President of the United States  
1600 Pennsylvania Ave. N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20500

December 23, 2022

Dear President Biden:

We write as members of the Hong Kong diaspora and Hong Kong advocates in the U.S. to request a renewal and expansion of the [Deferred Enforced Departure \(D.E.D.\)](#) policy for Hong Kongers, which is set to expire on Feb. 5, 2023. Since you first [announced](#) it last summer, D.E.D. has offered eligible individuals crucial immunities from deportation and the right to seek employment here. It has achieved your stated intention thus far: protecting members of our community in dire need of a safe haven due to the Chinese Communist Party's wholesale destruction of the freedoms that once made Hong Kong unique. Similar abuses are perpetuated against Uyghurs, Tibetans, Southern Mongolians, and other groups. "One Country, Two Systems" exists only in name today.

Alas, the political instability in Hong Kong shows no sign of slowing down. The Beijing-imposed National Security Law — which marked a major escalation of the crackdown, as you correctly observed — remains in place. Its "fundamental incompatibility with international law and with China's human rights obligations" are recently [highlighted](#) by a panel of U.N. experts. Defendants are held in pre-trial detention, presided over by government-handpicked judges appointed to special courts without juries. All this comes on top of the miscellaneous protest-related charges leveled against Hong Kongers since 2019. According to the [latest available data](#), 1,283 political prisoners are now behind bars; far more have been arrested and prosecuted.

We applaud you for your commitment to liberty around the world at a time when dictatorships in China, Russia, Iran, and beyond are increasingly flexing their muscles. Amid the global threat of authoritarian expansion, Hong Kongers have stood on the front line. D.E.D. safeguards and empowers those of us who have contributed to that effort. Therefore, we hope you will reauthorize the program for another 18 months to cover existing participants, as well as expand its scope to benefit newer arrivals who have set foot in the U.S. after Aug. 5, 2021. We likewise encourage your administration to pursue additional options in your policy toolkit that will benefit Hong Kongers, such as Temporary Protected Status and Priority 2 Refugee designations. These are consistent with what the U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission called for last month in an [annual report to Congress](#).

Last but not least, you may be aware that the recommendations above are non-permanent in nature, providing no clear, reliable, and long-term humanitarian pathways for Hong Kongers. That is why lawmakers on Capitol Hill — on a bipartisan, bicameral basis — have introduced several pieces of relevant legislation since 2020: the [Hong Kong Safe Harbor Act](#), the [Hong Kong People’s Freedom and Choice Act](#), the [Hong Kong Refugee Protection Act](#), and the [Hong Kong Victims of Communism Support Act](#). None have yet passed, however. We respectfully ask you to take up this important cause and work across the aisle to negotiate a deal, so that promoting democratic values and humanizing the immigration system can further define your legacy.

Thank you very much for your attention.

**The letter is signed by:**

1. Arizona for Hong Kong
2. Arizona State University Hong Kong Student Association
3. Campaign for Hong Kong
4. Chicago Solidarity With Hong Kong
5. Committee for Freedom in Hong Kong Foundation
6. Cornell Society for the Promotion of East Asian Liberty
7. DC4HK - Washingtonians Supporting Hong Kong
8. Fight for Freedom. Stand With Hong Kong.
9. Florida for Hong Kong
10. Hong Kong Affairs Association of Berkeley
11. Hong Kong Business Hub, USA
12. Hong Kong Collaborative Academic Network
13. Hong Kong Democracy and Human Rights Association at the University of Washington
14. Hong Kong Democracy Council
15. Hong Kong Forum, Los Angeles
16. Hong Kong Human Rights Concern Group at the University of Michigan
17. Hong Kong Liberation Coalition
18. Hong Kong Professional Network
19. Hong Kong Public Affairs and Services at the University of California, Davis
20. Hong Kong Rule of Law Monitor
21. Hong Kong Social Action Movements in Boston
22. Hong Kong Student Advocacy Group at New York University
23. Hong Kong Watch
24. Hong Kongers in San Diego
25. Hong Kongers in San Francisco Bay Area

26. KONGcentric
27. LA Hong Kongers
28. LA Yellow Circle
29. Lamp of Liberty
30. Lion Rock Café
31. LV4HK - Las Vegas Stands with Hong Kong
32. Northern California Hong Kong Club
33. NY4HK - New Yorkers Supporting Hong Kong
34. Penn State Students for Hong Kong
35. Philly4HK
36. Revolution of Our Times LA
37. SD4HK - San Diegans Supporting Hong Kong
38. SEArrious for HKG
39. Southern California Hong Kong Mothers' Club
40. Students for Hong Kong
41. TX4HK - Texans Supporting Hong Kong
42. University of Arizona Hong Kong Student Association
43. University of California, San Diego Hong Kong Cultural Society
44. University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign Stands With Hong Kong
45. US Hongkongers Club
46. Walk With Hong Kong Humanitarian Foundation
47. We the Hongkongers

**The letter is endorsed by:**

1. Campaign for Uyghurs
2. China Aid Association
3. China Against the Death Penalty
4. Citizen Power Initiatives for China
5. Dialogue China
6. Georgetown Center for Asian Law
7. Human Rights in China
8. Humanitarian China
9. Institute for China's Democratic Transition
10. International Campaign for Tibet
11. International Tibet Network Secretariat
12. Students for a Free Tibet
13. Uyghur American Association
14. Uyghur Human Rights Project