

119TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. RES. _____

Expressing the sense of the Senate that the People's Republic of China has engaged in the arbitrary or wrongful detention of American academics and has otherwise harmed the prospects for scientific collaboration and people-to-people exchanges between the United States and the People's Republic of China.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

Mr. MARKEY (for himself, _____) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on _____

RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of the Senate that the People's Republic of China has engaged in the arbitrary or wrongful detention of American academics and has otherwise harmed the prospects for scientific collaboration and people-to-people exchanges between the United States and the People's Republic of China.

Whereas the People's Republic of China (referred to in this preamble as the "PRC") has a long history of detaining United States citizens under dubious circumstances or depriving them of their freedom;

Whereas the PRC has used the arbitrary or wrongful detention of Americans and other foreign nationals for political purposes to obtain concessions from the United States

and other countries, which undermines the legitimacy of the PRC's judicial system;

Whereas current and previous Secretaries of State have determined, pursuant to section 302(e)(2)(A) of the Robert Levinson Hostage Recovery and Hostage-Taking Accountability Act (22 U.S.C. 1741(e)(2)(A)), that at least 5 United States citizens have been wrongfully detained in the PRC since the wrongful detention designation was established on December 27, 2020;

Whereas the Department of State previously recommended that United States citizens traveling to the PRC reconsider such travel due to serious risks, including wrongful detention, but the China Travel Advisory was downgraded from Level 3 to Level 2 on November 27, 2024;

Whereas the PRC's arbitrary or wrongful detention of United States citizens—

- (1) undermines the rule of law;
- (2) subjects United States citizens and their families to undue hardship; and
- (3) is unacceptably coercive to the United States Government;

Whereas, on November 5, 2024, the Government of the PRC arrested Dr. Youlin Chen, a United States citizen who has conducted transparent and open-source seismological research in cooperation with academics in the PRC, and has held him on baseless espionage charges for more than 600 days without a trial or access to his family;

Whereas the Government of the PRC deprived Dr. Chen of access to a lawyer for the first 434 days of his detention and interrogated him more than 100 times about his work without a lawyer present;

Whereas, despite high-level engagement between the United States Government and the Government of the PRC to resolve Dr. Chen’s case, the Government of the PRC has not yet taken any productive action to release Dr. Chen;

Whereas, on June 3, 2026, authorities of the PRC detained Min Zin, a United States citizen who is the executive director of a Myanmar-focused policy think tank, at the Kunming Changshui International Airport after he was invited to attend an academic event at a university in Yunnan province in the PRC;

Whereas the Kunming Municipal State Security Bureau has subjected Min Zin to detention and he has not yet had access to legal counsel;

Whereas the PRC’s practice of engaging in “hostage diplomacy” against the United States and other foreign countries runs contrary to its stated intent to promote academic cooperation and people-to-people exchanges and increases the risks for United States citizens and others considering travel to the PRC; and

Whereas, in advance of PRC leadership’s anticipated visit to Washington, D.C., in September 2026, the Government of the PRC has an opportunity to demonstrate its good faith and commitment to a constructive relationship of “strategic stability” by unconditionally releasing Dr. Youlin Chen and Min Zin: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the Senate—

2 (1) condemns the People’s Republic of China’s
3 repeated pattern of arbitrary or wrongful detention
4 of United States citizens as unacceptable and a ma-
5 terial harm to the bilateral relationship and the

1 prospects for bolstering academic cooperation and
2 people-to-people exchanges;

3 (2) urges the United States Government to
4 make the safe return of United States citizens de-
5 tained in China a top priority, including the return
6 of Dr. Youlin Chen and Min Zin;

7 (3) urges the Secretary of State to use all avail-
8 able tools to negotiate the release of all United
9 States nationals being unlawfully or wrongfully de-
10 tained in the People's Republic of China, including
11 by—

12 (A) considering adding a “D” indicator to
13 the China Travel Advisory to make it clear to
14 United States nationals considering travel to
15 the People's Republic of China that the country
16 engages in the wrongful detention of United
17 States citizens;

18 (B) raising the Travel Advisory Level on
19 the PRC from Level 2 (exercise increased cau-
20 tion) to Level 3 (reconsider travel) to reflect the
21 current travel risks; and

22 (C) reviewing the criteria for the designa-
23 tion of a country as a State Sponsor of Wrong-
24 ful Detention pursuant to section 306A of the
25 Robert Levinson Hostage Recovery and Hos-

1 tage-Taking Accountability Act (22 U.S.C.
2 1741d–1); and
3 (4) supports President Trump’s efforts to raise
4 concerns about the continued detention of Dr. Chen
5 and Min Zin to bring both United States citizens
6 home to their loved ones safely and quickly.