

Hong Kong People's Freedom and Choice Act

The Chinese Communist Party formally imposed a sweeping national security law on Hong Kong in July 2020, as part of Beijing's ongoing crackdown on peaceful protesters. The new law would create a new security and surveillance apparatus in Hong Kong, require stricter oversight of schools and civic organization, and impose harsh penalties for vaguely worded offenses like separatism, subversion, or collusion with foreign countries.

The Hong Kong People's Freedom and Choice Act would provide an expedited path to the United States for Hong Kong's entrepreneurs, scientists, and academics and would condemn China's crackdown on Hong Kongers' rights.

Key Components of Hong Kong People's Freedom and Choice Act

- It would expedite immigration admission to highly skilled Hong Kong residents, including those with graduate degrees and business owners with more than 50 employees. Applicants in the STEM fields would receive priority.
- It would expedite residency for Hong Kongers who fled to the United States in light of political persecution. This replicates the protections made by the Chinese Student Protection Act of 1992 in response to the Tiananmen Square Incident.
- It would continue to treat Hong Kong as distinct from mainland China for purposes of U.S. immigration law and numerical limits. This would ensure Hong Kongers are not counted under the cap for mainland China.

The Hong Kong People's Freedom and Choice Act would reaffirm the policies of the United States-Hong Kong Policy Act of 1992. It would also promote international cooperation on efforts related to Hong Kong and support the United States' commitment to uphold international agreements including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.