



NANCY PELOSI  
SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE

## 35 YEARS OF LEADERSHIP & PROGRESS ON HUMAN RIGHTS IN CHINA

For more than three decades, Speaker Nancy Pelosi has been one of the fiercest and strongest champions in the Congress for human rights in China: leading the fight for dignity and freedom for the oppressed, while holding the Chinese Communist Party accountable for its crimes.

Two years after the Tiananmen Square Massacre in 1989, then-Congresswoman Pelosi and a bipartisan Congressional delegation traveled to Beijing to shine a light on the government's brutal actions on that tragic day. Despite intimidation, the Members visited Tiananmen Square and unfurled a banner that read: "To Those Who Died for Democracy in China." Pelosi fought for and finally secured the enactment of her Chinese Student Protection Act of 1992, which provided a pathway to citizenship for Chinese students fleeing repression. Throughout her tenure in Congress, Pelosi has led the way to carry forward the memory of Tiananmen: passing resolutions, holding events and hosting survivors to foster remembrance and reconciliation.

As the CCP has cracked down on freedom of speech and protest, Pelosi has shined a bright light on the persecution of dissidents and journalists. In 2002, then-Democratic Whip Pelosi offered then-Chinese Vice President Hu Jintao four letters from Members of Congress raising issues of human rights as he participated in an official visit to the United States – but he refused to accept the letters. In 2009, Speaker Pelosi traveled to China and hand-delivered a letter to then-President Hu calling for the release of political prisoners, twenty years after the brutal crackdown in Tiananmen Square.

Over the years, Speaker Pelosi has championed the cause of many more freedom fighters in China while helping several secure their releases. When imprisoned Chinese democracy advocate Liu Xiaobo was awarded the 2010 Nobel Peace Prize in absentia, Speaker Pelosi attended the ceremony to celebrate his courage and demand his release. After the government of China suppressed the voices of pro-democracy protesters in Hong Kong in 2019, under the leadership of Speaker Pelosi the House passed the Hong Kong Human Rights and Democracy Act to impose new sanctions on Chinese government officials and a new requirement that the State Department conduct an annual review of Hong Kong's political status. Speaker Pelosi continues to speak out against those suffering under the CCP's escalating crackdown on freedom, most recently in May 2022 when she penned an opinion piece in *The Washington Post* condemning the arrest of Cardinal Zen in Hong Kong under the new national security law.

Speaker Nancy Pelosi has long fought to link trade benefits to the status of human rights, believing that using our economic leverage to fight for the rights of all peoples is our moral duty. Pelosi has used every legislative opportunity to demand human rights and labor rights from the CCP. In 1992, then-Congresswoman Pelosi helped lead the United States-China Act, which connected the annual renewal of China's "Most Favored Nation" status (renamed "Normal Trade Relations" in 1998) to demonstrated improvements in human rights by the Chinese government. This legislation passed the House and Senate on an overwhelming bipartisan basis but was vetoed. Pelosi continued to lead opposition to the annual renewal of China's trade status throughout the decade, focusing on the impact of China's use of prison labor on American workers and the lack of respect for political freedoms. While serving as co-chair of the Congressional Working Group on China, Pelosi led bipartisan opposition to Permanent Normal Trade Relations with China due to Beijing's lack of progress on human rights – and in defiance of the stance of the Clinton Administration. When the government of China petitioned to join the World Trade Organization, then-Congresswoman Pelosi helped lead legislation that would withdraw America from the WTO if China were accepted into the agreement without the explicit support of the United States.

When Permanent Normal Trade Relations were eventually granted in 2000, Pelosi helped secure alongside that legislation the creation of the Congressional-Executive Commission on China to continue aggressive oversight.

Each time the Chinese government has sought the honor of hosting the Olympic Games, Pelosi has strongly urged the world not to give an official imprimatur to Beijing's abysmal record on human rights. In 1993, as the International Olympic Committee eyed Beijing for the 2000 Summer Games, then-Congresswoman Pelosi led her colleagues to help successfully convince the world that China's dismal record on human rights was disqualifying. She partnered with Congressmen Tom Lantos and Chris Cox in 2001 to oppose China's bid for the 2008 Games. While unsuccessful, Pelosi laid down an important marker: that host nations must uphold the values outlined in the Olympic Charter. Ahead of the 2022 Winter Olympics in Beijing, Speaker Pelosi was a key leader in ensuring there would be no official United States presence at the Games – a movement joined by many American allies around the world. Testifying before the Congressional-Executive Commission on China in May 2021, she became the first high-ranking American official to call for a diplomatic boycott, and she continued urging the Biden Administration to commit to this effort before the official announcement in December 2021.

Speaker Pelosi has been at the forefront of efforts to confront the crimes against humanity against the Uyghur people – years before the United States government officially recognized them as genocide. In 2019, as new reporting emerged about persecution in Xinjiang, Speaker Pelosi strongly condemned China – and kicked off a new legislative push to counter these crimes. In 2020, Speaker Pelosi was instrumental in bringing to the House Floor the Uyghur Human Rights Policy Act to require the federal government to report on human rights abuses against the Uyghur people. This bill, which was signed into law in 2020 after passing on a nearly unanimous vote, was strengthened by the leadership of Speaker Pelosi and the House Democratic Caucus on the UIGHUR Act – which originated many of the provisions in the final legislation. Speaker Pelosi engineered the House passage of the Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act in 2020 on a 406–3 vote and in 2021 on a 428–1 vote: another strong step linking trade relations and human rights. This legislation, which President Biden signed into law, will employ America's great economic might to combat Beijing's brutality against the Uyghur people: blocking the importation of goods made with forced labor and holding those who exploit forced labor accountable.

Pelosi has offered an outspoken voice for the people of Tibet. After sharing a decades-long personal friendship with the Dalai Lama, in 2007 she presented His Holiness with the Congressional Gold Medal: a tribute to his leadership in the fight for freedom. Pelosi visited the Dalai Lama in Dharamshala as Speaker in 2008, and she traveled again as Democratic Leader in 2017. In November 2015, Pelosi led the first U.S. Congressional delegation to Tibet since the 2008 demonstrations and violence. During the visit, she met with Tibetan students and leaders, visited holy sites and met with key Chinese officials to advocate for Tibetan autonomy and for the preservation of Tibetan language, culture and religion. Speaker Pelosi spearheaded the enactment of the Tibet Policy and Support Act, which became law in 2020. This landmark legislation updated a two-decades-old policy toward Tibet in response to accelerating aggression from Beijing: protecting the sacred right of the Tibetan people to determine their political and spiritual leadership.

Speaker Pelosi made history in 2022 when she led a Congressional delegation to Taiwan: becoming the first House Speaker and highest-ranking U.S. official to visit the island in a quarter-century. Her visit sent an unequivocal message that America stands with Taiwan, a key democratic partner. For her decades-long commitment to the people of Taiwan and to human rights in China, President Tsai Ing-wen bestowed upon her the Order of Propitious Clouds with Special Grand Cordon – the highest civilian honor and an enduring symbol of the U.S.-Taiwan friendship.