



MUSLIM BAR
ASSOCIATION
OF NEW YORK

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March 1, 2021

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer
U.S. Senate Majority Leader
322 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Mitchell McConnell
U.S. Senate Minority Leader
317 Russell Senate Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senate Leader Schumer and Minority Leader McConnell,

On behalf of the Muslim Bar Association of New York (“MuBANY”), I write to congratulate you on your new role as Majority Leader of the United States Senate and to share our support for The Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act (S.3471) (“UFLP” or “The Act”). This Act was introduced and passed by the U.S. House of Representatives in September 2020 and is now with the U.S. Senate Committee on Foreign Relations. Should this bill become law, the United States would ensure that goods made with forced labor in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (“XUAR”) in China do not enter the United States supply chain and that American entities are not funding these human rights violations. Given the bipartisan support for this bill, we respectfully call on you both and the U.S. Senate Committee on Foreign Relations to bring this bill to the Senate floor for a vote.

Since 2017, China has detained over 1 million Uyghurs, Kazakhs, and other members of Muslim minority groups from XUAR, in internment camps. Numerous human rights organizations, NGOs, state officials, and other groups have reported that detained Uyghurs and Kazakhs are tortured, coerced to disavow their religious beliefs and cultural practices, and compelled to work in forced labor programs, raped, and subjected to involuntary sterilization or forced organ harvesting. A Foreign Policy Report states that China’s treatment of these ethnic and religious minorities now meets the United Nations definition of genocide based on the mass sterilization, forced abortions, and mandatory birth control campaign.

MuBANY was pleased with the State Department and U.S. Customs and Border Protection’s (CBP) recent actions to confront China over human rights violations and widespread forced labor practices in the region. We agree with the State Department’s public declaration that the Chinese government is committing genocide and crimes against humanity through its wide-

scale repression of Muslim ethnic minorities in XUAR. MuBANY also agrees with CBP's decision to ban the import of cotton and tomato products at U.S borders. While we applaud these bold actions, they do not go far enough to hold China accountable for these practices. The Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act comprehensively addresses these concerns as it prohibits all goods derived from forced labor from entering the U.S. unless the companies themselves can ensure that no forced labor practices were involved.

The United States must take tangible action to confront China's reprehensible acts through legislation that holds China accountable for its horrific labor practices such as debt bondage, restriction of movement, withheld wages, and abusive living and working conditions among others. The passage of the Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act would ensure that goods made in XUAR using forced labor are banned from the U.S., impose sanctions on foreign individuals and entities who engage in forced labor, and require companies to disclose information related to XUAR. Moreover, it would send a clear message to the global community that the U.S. will not be complicit in China's horrific labor practices and serve as a much-needed wake-up call to industries that have not risen to the challenge of sourcing products ethically.

MuBANY, one of the largest and most active bar associations for Muslim lawyers in New York, is committed to advocating for justice for all communities. In particular, we are committed to advocating for resolution of critical issues affecting the local and national Muslim population, promoting education on matters impacting the Muslim community, advancing and protecting the rights of Muslims in America, and creating an environment that helps guarantee the full, fair and equal representation of Muslims in American society. To that end, we feel strongly that U.S. based entities should not be contributing to another country's disgraceful forced labor practices and gross human rights violations against Muslims on the basis of their faith. MuBANY respectfully calls on your offices as well as the Senate Foreign Relations Committee to take the necessary actions to support the Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act and advance this bill to the floor for a vote. We hope the passage of this Act will compel China and complicit organizations to act in accordance with international law, and cease the systematic persecution against Uyghurs, Kazakhs, and other Muslims in XUAR.

We thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,



Sania W. Khan, President
Muslim Bar Association of New York

CC: U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman, Senator James E. Risch and
Ranking Member, Senator Bob Menendez
U.S. Senator for New York, Kirsten E. Gillibrand