

119TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 8982

To direct the Secretary of State to advocate for the inclusion and recognition of the Central Tibetan Administration, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MAY 21, 2026

Mr. MCGOVERN (for himself and Mr. MCCAUL) introduced the following bill;
which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

A BILL

To direct the Secretary of State to advocate for the inclusion and recognition of the Central Tibetan Administration, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Assuring the Future
5 of Tibet Act of 2026”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds the following:

8 (1) The relationship between the United States
9 Government and Tibet began in 1908, when United
10 States diplomat William Rockhill met the 13th Dalai

1 Lama to discuss Tibet's relations with China and
2 Great Britain and facilitate an exchange of gifts be-
3 tween the Dalai Lama and United States President
4 Theodore Roosevelt.

5 (2) The relationship of the United States Gov-
6 ernment with His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama
7 began in 1942 when President Franklin Delano Roo-
8 sevelt wrote him to state, "There are in the United
9 States of America, many persons, among them my-
10 self, who [are] long and greatly interested in your
11 land and people ...".

12 (3) The relationship of the United States Con-
13 gress with the 14th Dalai Lama began in 1979 when
14 he first visited Capitol Hill and strengthened in
15 1987 when he presented his Five Point Peace Plan
16 to the Congressional Human Rights Caucus in the
17 United States Capitol building.

18 (4) The first face-to-face meeting between
19 Presidents of the United States and the Dalai Lama
20 began in 1991 when President George H.W. Bush
21 hosted him at the White House.

22 (5) Engagement between the United States
23 Government and the Central Tibetan Administration
24 and members of Tibetan communities has grown and
25 deepened in recent decades to include diverse pro-

1 gramming to support health, education, humani-
2 tarian aid, governance, people-to-people exchanges,
3 as authorized in the Tibetan Policy and Support Act
4 of 2020 (22 U.S.C. 6901 note), and dialogue on
5 global matters of mutual interest.

6 (6) The Dalai Lama in 1950 assumed the role
7 of head of state of Tibet.

8 (7) The Dalai Lama continued to serve as the
9 formal head of the Tibetan government-in-exile, later
10 known as the Central Tibetan Administration, after
11 1959.

12 (8) In 2011, the Dalai Lama transferred his
13 political authority to the Tibetan government-in-
14 exile, whose executive and legislative officials are
15 chosen by democratic election, a decision that was
16 codified by the Tibetan parliament-in-exile through
17 an amendment to the Tibetan Charter vesting execu-
18 tive power of the Central Tibetan Administration in
19 the Sikyong, the chief executive.

20 (9) In 2011, and reaffirmed in 2025, the Dalai
21 Lama announced that the determination of his suc-
22 cessor will be made by the Gaden Phodrang Trust,
23 the Office of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, which
24 has “sole authority to recognize the future reincar-

1 nation; no one else has any such authority to inter-
2 fere in this matter”.

3 (10) The next Dalai Lama, who will be selected
4 according to the process set by the 14th Dalai
5 Lama, will not come of majority age for many years
6 after being selected.

7 (11) It has been the long-standing policy of the
8 United States to promote the human rights and dis-
9 tinct religious, cultural, linguistic, and historical
10 identity of the Tibetan people, as acknowledged and
11 codified by the Tibetan Policy and Support Act of
12 2020 (22 U.S.C. 6901 note).

13 (12) The Promoting a Resolution to the Tibet-
14 China Dispute Act (Public Law 118–70) character-
15 izes the dispute between Tibet and the People’s Re-
16 public of China as unresolved, states the sense of
17 Congress that “claims made by the People’s Repub-
18 lic of China that Tibet has been a part of China
19 since ancient times are historically inaccurate”, and
20 states that it is United States policy to resolve the
21 dispute “in accordance with international law, in-
22 cluding the United Nations Charter, by peaceful
23 means, through dialogue without preconditions”.

24 (13) Article 1 of the International Covenant on
25 Civil and Political Rights and Article 1 of the Inter-

1 national Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural
2 Rights provide, “All peoples have the right of self-
3 determination. By virtue of that right they freely de-
4 termine their political status and freely pursue their
5 economic, social and cultural development”.

6 (14) The People’s Republic of China’s constitu-
7 tion and the People’s Republic of China’s Regional
8 Ethnic Autonomy Law of 1984 provide for a right
9 of regional autonomy for Tibetans and other non-
10 Han Chinese populations, including “the freedom to
11 use and develop their own spoken and written lan-
12 guages” and maintain or change their own cultural
13 practices.

14 (15) The People’s Republic of China’s Law on
15 Promoting Ethnic Unity and Progress approved by
16 the National People’s Congress in March 2026 con-
17 tradicts previous statutory and constitutional guar-
18 antees of meaningful autonomy for Tibetans and
19 other non-Han Chinese populations by statutorily
20 mandating that education be conducted in Man-
21 darin, requiring that written Chinese be given prom-
22 inence over alternative scripts in public settings, and
23 legally prioritizing national identity over distinct eth-
24 nic identity.

1 (16) The Government of the People’s Republic
2 of China has provided no verifiable evidence that the
3 Tibetan people were consulted, much less approved,
4 the diminution of their right to autonomy under the
5 People’s Republic of China’s Law on Promoting
6 Ethnic Unity and Progress.

7 **SEC. 3. SENSE OF CONGRESS.**

8 It is the sense of Congress that—

9 (1) the Government of the People’s Republic of
10 China has reneged on its legal commitment under
11 the Constitution of the People’s Republic of China,
12 the Regional Ethnic Autonomy Law, and relevant
13 international law to provide a high degree of re-
14 gional autonomy to the Tibetan people, including the
15 right to use and develop their own spoken and writ-
16 ten languages, through the enactment in 2026 of the
17 People’s Republic of China’s Law on Promoting
18 Ethnic Unity and Progress, which instead facilitates
19 the assimilation of Tibetans and erosion of the right
20 of the Tibetan people to exercise their own religious,
21 cultural and language rights;

22 (2) the People’s Republic of China has denied
23 the Tibetan people the ability to exercise their right
24 to self-determination as provided by international
25 law;

1 (3) the United States has expressed support for
2 the Dalai Lama's vision of a negotiated agreement
3 through dialogue without preconditions between the
4 Government of the People's Republic of China and
5 the Dalai Lama or his representatives or democrat-
6 ically elected leaders of the Tibetan community as
7 one means of allowing the Tibetan people to exercise
8 their right to self-determination;

9 (4) the Government of the People's Republic of
10 China has not demonstrated sincerity or seriousness
11 in its approach to engaging in meaningful dialogue
12 with the Dalai Lama or his representatives or to
13 reach a negotiated resolution that includes the aspi-
14 rations of the Tibetan people;

15 (5) the Gaden Phodrang Trust serves as the le-
16 gitimate and sole authority to identify and recognize
17 Dalai Lamas; and

18 (6) the Central Tibetan Administration is the
19 legitimate representative of the Tibetan people.

20 **SEC. 4. STATEMENT OF POLICY.**

21 It is the policy of the United States—

22 (1) to affirm the commitment of the United
23 States to a resolution of the dispute between Tibet
24 and the People's Republic of China as a matter of
25 strategic interest to the United States;

1 (2) to support the Tibetan people's free exercise
2 of their fundamental and universal human rights
3 under international law, including the right to self-
4 determination as provided by Article 1 of the Inter-
5 national Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and
6 Article 1 of the International Covenant on Eco-
7 nomic, Social and Cultural Rights;

8 (3) to maintain engagement with the Tibetan
9 people directly and through their democratically
10 elected leadership and through their religious and
11 cultural leaders in order to promote their aspirations
12 with regard to their distinct historical, cultural, reli-
13 gious, and linguistic identity;

14 (4) that the Central Tibetan Administration
15 represents continuity of governance of the Tibetan
16 people as established by the Dalai Lama; and

17 (5) to support the Central Tibetan Administra-
18 tion in its effort to carry out the responsibilities for
19 which it has been empowered by the Dalai Lama
20 and legitimized by the Tibetan people through their
21 exercise of a genuine democratic process.

22 **SEC. 5. ADVOCACY.**

23 In order to carry out the policy under section 4—

24 (1) the President shall direct the United States
25 Permanent Representative to the United Nations to

1 use the voice, vote, and influence of the United
2 States at the United Nations to advocate for the
3 Central Tibetan Administration’s observer status
4 within the United Nations General Assembly and
5 relevant agencies of the United Nations; and

6 (2) the Secretary of State shall—

7 (A) advocate for the inclusion of the Cen-
8 tral Tibetan Administration in relevant inter-
9 national bodies and groupings; and

10 (B) organize like-minded partners to sup-
11 port greater international recognition of the
12 Central Tibetan Administration within bodies of
13 the United Nations and other multilateral fora.

14 **SEC. 6. HIGH-LEVEL ENGAGEMENT AND DIPLOMATIC PRO-**
15 **TOCOL.**

16 In order to carry out the policy under section 4, Sec-
17 retary of State shall—

18 (1) lead interagency efforts to directly engage
19 at the most senior levels with Central Tibetan Ad-
20 ministration officials, including the Sikyong and the
21 designated representatives of the Sikyong;

22 (2) take steps to ensure the Sikyong of the
23 Central Tibetan Administration is extended appro-
24 priate diplomatic courtesies, including the provision

1 of appropriate security details during visits to the
2 United States consistent with a head of government;

3 (3) consider the applicability of diplomatic
4 privileges and immunities to officials of the Central
5 Tibetan Administration; and

6 (4) urge partners and allies of the United
7 States to engage with and support the Central Ti-
8 betan Administration at similarly senior levels.

9 **SEC. 7. REPORT.**

10 Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment
11 of this Act and annually thereafter, the Secretary of State
12 shall submit to the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the
13 House of Representatives and the Committee on Foreign
14 Relations of the Senate a report that describes the status
15 of the implementation of section 5 and section 6.

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