

March 16, 2020

Letter to the U.S. Census Bureau and Department of Commerce

It is with grave concern that we have found that the U.S. Census Bureau is using the American people's tax dollars to buy services from what can credibly be described as the Chinese Communist Party's propaganda outlets. We write to you today to encourage you to review this situation and ensure that U.S. taxpayer dollars do not support a government that is fundamentally opposed to the human rights we aspire to.

In November 2018, The Hoover Institution at Stanford University published a report titled "[Chinese Influence & American Interests](#)," which "documents the extent of China's expanding influence operations inside the United States."

For the 2020 census, the Census Bureau has selected a total of 64 print media, 50 TV, and 24 radio stations around the country to be on the Chinese-language media-buy list to reach the Chinese-American community, through an Asian-American media agency (TDW+Co). This media-buy list includes official Chinese official state-owned media, and at least one Chinese radio which is broadcasting without an FCC license, as well as many Chinese-American media outlets controlled or heavily influenced by the Chinese regime.

CCP-controlled/influenced media entities are a major tool used by the Chinese government to mislead Chinese communities in U.S. These media outlets spread official CCP propaganda against various religious groups, including Uyghur Muslims, Christians, Tibetans, Falun Gong, and the Church of Almighty God. No U.S. government agencies should allocate any public funding or contracts to support these outlets.

Further, the final media-buy list does not include the handful of U.S.-based independent media outlets that have been critical of the Chinese regime's poor human rights record and history of religious persecution. These outlets also have a great deal of support and influence within local Chinese-American communities.

Major aspects of the Census 2020 Chinese media buy list include:

State-owned media: CCTV-4

One of the Chinese communist regime's main television broadcasting channels, CCTV-4, has a branch based in Los Angeles, which was selected as one of the paid media outlets. The Department of Justice should demand that CCTV-4 register as a foreign agent under the Foreign Agents Registration Act (FARA), just as its English counterpart CGTN has been required to do.

UPDATE: After this was [reported by Axios](#), CCTV-4 was removed from the list of media vendors. The Census Bureau then told Axios CCTV4 was mistakenly included on the list and it has never purchased

advertising on CCTV-4. The undersigned continue to call for greater oversight if such a mistake was made and for a reevaluation of media contracts.

State-controlled media:

SinoVision, China Press (Qiaobao), and Sky Link TV, among others, are media outlets on the Census 2020 paid media list that have been categorized by the Hoover Institute as “subsidiaries of Chinese state-owned media outlets.”

State-influenced media:

There are several media outlets on the Census 2020 paid media list that have been categorized by the Hoover Institute as “heavily influenced by the Chinese regime,” including Phoenix TV, Wenxuecity, Sing Tao, Ming Pao, and iTalkBB TV, among others.

Non-licensed Radio Broadcaster:

There are allegations that Phoenix TV, a proxy of the Chinese communist regime, is associated with Uradio, a Los Angeles-based radio broadcaster. Uradio broadcasts on XEWW 690 AM, but has been broadcasting without an FCC license. The FCC has been [investigating the case](#). Uradio should not be considered as a Census partner both because of its association with the Chinese communist regime and its lack of a proper permit.

Media Agencies Free from Foreign Regime Influence:

The media outlets categorized by the Hoover Institute as “remaining independent of PRC control” are all not included from the Census 2020 paid media: The Epoch Times, NTD TV, Sound of Hope Radio Network, Vision Times, etc. All of these outlets are major Chinese-language media sources in the U.S. in terms of print volume, viewership, listenership, and web traffic. By failing to include these media on the media-buy list, a large sector of the Chinese-American population will be excluded from learning about Census 2020 Chinese-language outreach efforts.

Further concerns with the media buy:

The current media-buy selection made by TDW+Co has resulted in the payment of taxpayer money to CCP-controlled/influenced media, which undermines the U.S. government’s national defense strategy and homeland security guidelines, as well as putting at risk the reputations of the Census Bureau, the Department of Commerce, and the U.S. government.

It is concerning that the Census Bureau’s funds could be used to subsidize and lend legitimacy to “China’s Pursuit of a New World Media Order,” described in a 2019 [report](#) by Reporters Without Borders. The Chinese regime has waged media warfare “combatting ‘hostile’ western forces,” and Chinese state TV channels have broadcast at least 83 forced confessions since 2013, with 29 of them involving journalists or bloggers.

By supporting CCP-controlled media, the Census Bureau’s media plan marginalizes legitimate U.S.-based independent Chinese-language media which have strong influence in local communities. Chinese

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immigrants have come to the United States to pursue freedom and democracy. Yet the Census Bureau's media buy instead lends legitimacy to the CCP's propaganda outlets in the eyes of viewers who sees U.S. Government messages on their platforms.

We call for the following actions:

We are asking for the Secretary of Commerce to lead a reevaluation of current policies that allowed for this contract. Further, to release an explanation of the oversight, put an immediate stop to any future payments to the outlets listed above, and create a plan for Chinese-language media outreach for Census 2020 going forward that does not utilize propaganda companies.

In conclusion, the CCP-controlled or influenced media entities are a major tool used by the Chinese government to mislead Chinese communities in U.S. These media outlets repeatedly spread CCP official misinformation and slander against various religious groups, including Christians, Tibetans, Falun Gong, Uyghurs, the Church of Almighty God, etc. No U.S. government agencies should allocate any public funding or contracts to services from these outlets.

The Coalition to Advance Religious Freedom in China is happy to provide resources, expert testimony, and further communication regarding this urgent matter. Thank you for your attention to these matters.

Sincerely,

Coalition to Advance Religious Freedom in China

China Aid Association

Frank Wolf, Member of Congress 1981-2014, retired

Uyghur Human Rights Project

Xiaoxu Sean Lin, Executive Director, Global Alliance Against Communist Propaganda & Disinformation

Lantos Foundation for Human Rights & Justice

Citizen Power Initiatives for China

The Church of Almighty God

Campaign for Uyghurs

Jubilee Campaign USA

Family Research Council

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Church of Scientology National Affairs Office

Save the Persecuted Christians

Scott Morgan, President, Red Eagle Enterprises

Masjid Muhammad, The Nation's Mosque

Bitter Winter, a daily magazine

CESNUR, Center for Studies on New Religions

ORLIR, International Observatory on Religious Liberty of Refugees

Rev. Joseph K. Grieboski, Director, Office of Ecumenical, Interfaith, and Global Engagement

Justice For All

Unified Buddhist Church of Vietnam, Office of External Affairs

Jorge Márquez, pastor and founder of the "Misión Vida Para Las Naciones" Church in the Oriental Republic of Uruguay

Mr. Shane Stevens

International Multi-Faith Coalition

Russian Orthodox Autonomous Church of America

Friends of Falun Gong

Satoshi Nishihata, Washington Bureau Chief, Happy Science USA Washington Bureau

Boat People SOS

Committee for Religious Freedom in Vietnam

Uyghur American Association

International Christian Foundation for Democracy