

**Supporting Hong Kong's Pro-Democracy Movement Through U.S. Refugee Policy
Hearing before the Senate Judiciary Committee
Subcommittee on Border Security and Immigration**

Questions from Senator Richard Blumenthal

*Answered by Joey Siu
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1. Do you support the passage of the Hong Kong People's Freedom and Choice Act of 2020, H.R. 8428?

I support the passage of the *Hong Kong People's Freedom and Choice Act of 2020 (H.R. 8428)* and believe that the United States should join like-minded allies in providing safe harbors to Hongkongers in need.

2. Please describe how the passage of the Hong Kong People's Freedom and Choice Act of 2020, H.R. 8428, would help Hong Kongers in the United States, Hong Kongers domestically, and the Hong Kong democracy movement more generally.

Many Hongkongers are now living abroad in exile, including here in the United States. Due to their political stances, participation in grassroots movements in support of Hong Kong's pro-democracy struggle, they have well-founded fears of becoming a victim of political persecution after returning to Hong Kong. With the *Hong Kong People's Freedom and Choice Act (H.R. 8428)*, Hongkongers who are already in the U.S. could be granted *Temporary Protected Status (TPS)* to remain in the country legally and obtain work permits.

As situation in Hong Kong continues to worsen after the imposition of the National Security Law, Hongkongers who participated in the pro-democracy movement, especially those who played a significant role as for example journalists, first-aid volunteers, social workers and organizers as well as those facing protest-related charges are in desperate need to escape. The expedited refugee and asylum application processing could effectively protect them by getting them to safety quickly.

Regardless of the legislative approach, Congress should also encourage this administration and the next to exercise the considerable powers of the executive branch to extend assistance to Hongkongers.

The newly-imposed National Security Law criminalizes even the more trivial forms of protest. Since the implementation, at least 95 Hongkongers have been arrested under it, including 55 activists, academics and law professionals, who were arrested on January 5th on suspicion of “subversion” for participating and organizing the democratic primaries in July 2020. As the Chinese Communist Party continues to crack down on Hong Kong’s movement and suppresses the people’s freedom and fundamental human rights, a safe haven for them is much-needed.

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