

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

March 23, 2018

Dear Presidents of Texas Colleges, Universities, and Other Educational Institutions,

We write to express our deep concerns over Chinese government influence spreading throughout educational institutions in Texas.

Confucius Institutes and other Chinese government supported academic organizations, such as the China-United States Exchange Foundation, are spreading China's political agenda, suppressing academic debate, and stealing vital academic research.

Confucius Institutes were launched by the Chinese Communist Party's United Front Work Department.<sup>1</sup> The United Front Work Department's goals are to "win support for China's political agenda, accumulate influence overseas and gather key information."<sup>2</sup> Confucius Institutes are overseen by the Hanban (the Office of Chinese Language Council International) inside China's Ministry of Education.<sup>3</sup> It was led by China's Vice Premier Liu Yandong, who also led the United Front Work Department when the program began.<sup>4 5</sup> The Hanban's governing council is composed of 12 Chinese government ministries, including the State Council (chief administrative authority of the Chinese government), the State Press and Publications Administration (the state-run media and propaganda department), and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.<sup>6</sup> Confucius Institutes require an adherence to Chinese law, and are used as a platform for China to combat its Five Poisons, among other suppressive actions.<sup>7 8</sup>

- In 2010, China's minister of propaganda declared, "We should actively carry out international propaganda battles against issuers such as Tibet, Xinjiang, Taiwan, human

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<sup>1</sup> Kyngge, James. Hornby Lucy. Anderlini, Jamil. "Inside China's Secret 'Magic Weapon' for Worldwide Influence." *Financial Times*. 26 October 2017. <https://www.ft.com/content/fb2b3934-b004-11e7-beba-5521c713abf4>

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Epstein, Ethan. "How China Infiltrated U.S. Classrooms." *Politico Magazine*. 17 January 2018. <https://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2018/01/16/how-china-infiltrated-us-classrooms-216327>

<sup>4</sup> Hanban Institute. [http://english.hanban.org/article/2016-12/14/content\\_668246.htm](http://english.hanban.org/article/2016-12/14/content_668246.htm)

<sup>5</sup> Rogin, Josh. "Waking Up to China's Infiltration of American Colleges." *Washington Post*. 18 February 2018. [https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/global-opinions/waking-up-to-chinas-infiltration-of-american-colleges/2018/02/18/99d3bee8-13f7-11e8-9570-29c9830535e5\\_story.html?utm\\_term=.027bbcf5dc9d](https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/global-opinions/waking-up-to-chinas-infiltration-of-american-colleges/2018/02/18/99d3bee8-13f7-11e8-9570-29c9830535e5_story.html?utm_term=.027bbcf5dc9d)

<sup>6</sup> Peterson, Rachele. "American Universities are Welcoming China's Trojan Horse." *Foreign Policy*. 9 May 2017. <http://foreignpolicy.com/2017/05/09/american-universities-are-welcoming-chinas-trojan-horse-confucius-institutes/>

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Epstein, Ethan. "How China Infiltrated U.S. Classrooms." *Politico Magazine*. 17 January 2018. <https://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2018/01/16/how-china-infiltrated-us-classrooms-216327>

rights and Falun Gong. We should do well in establishing and operating overseas cultural centers and Confucius Institutes.”<sup>9</sup>

- In a 2011 speech, a standing member of the Chinese Communist Party’s Politburo avowed, “the Confucius Institute...has made an important contribution toward improving our soft power. The ‘Confucius’ brand has a natural attractiveness. Using the excuse of teaching Chinese language, everything looks reasonable and logical.”<sup>10</sup>

Fortunately, the U.S. Intelligence Community and your peer academic institutions are recognizing this threat. The FBI Director recently informed Congress that the FBI is investigating some Confucius Institutes on university campuses.<sup>11</sup> There are currently more than 100 Confucius Institutes in the United States, approximately 40% in the world.<sup>12</sup> Additionally, leading universities in the United States, including the University of Texas at Austin, and across the globe have severed their relationships with Chinese government supported organizations recognizing that their academic integrity could be compromised and research could be stolen. This kind of malicious behavior is consistent with their history of harming American innovation and theft of our intellectual property.

- In February, FBI Director Christopher Wray testified to the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence that the FBI has “concerns about the Confucius Institutes,” and is investigating them as a result. Director Wray warned about the use of non-traditional intelligence collection from China; he stated they are “exploiting the very open research and development environment we have, which we all revere, but they’re taking advantage of it.”<sup>13</sup>
- Also in February, the University of West Florida announced its plans to end its agreement with its Confucius Institute, following the receipt of a concerned letter from Senator Marco Rubio.<sup>14</sup>
- In January, the University of Texas at Austin rejected a proposal from the China United States Exchange Foundation (CUSEF). The CUSEF is connected to the United Front Work Department.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Senate Intelligence Committee. “Worldwide Threats.” *C-Span*. 18 February 2018. <https://www.c-span.org/video/?440888-1/fbi-director-rob-porter-background-check-completed-july>

<sup>12</sup> Epstein, Ethan. “How China Infiltrated U.S. Classrooms.” *Politico Magazine*. 17 January 2018. <https://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2018/01/16/how-china-infiltrated-us-classrooms-216327>

<sup>13</sup> Senate Intelligence Committee. “Worldwide Threats.” *C-Span*. 18 February 2018. <https://www.c-span.org/video/?440888-1/fbi-director-rob-porter-background-check-completed-july>

<sup>14</sup> Baucum, Joseph. “UWF Cuts Ties with Controversial Chinese-affiliated Confucius Institute.” *Pensacola News Journal*. 7 February 2018. <https://www.pnj.com/story/money/business/2018/02/07/uwf-cuts-ties-chinese-run-confucius-institute-criticized-controversial-chinese-government-affiliated/312966002/>

<sup>15</sup> Rogin, Josh. “University Rejects Chinese Communist Party-linked Influence Efforts on Campus.” *Washington Post*. 14 January 2018. [https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/global-opinions/university-rejects-chinese-communist-party-linked-influence-efforts-on-campus/2018/01/14/c454b54e-f7de-11e7-beb6-c8d48830c54d\\_story.html?utm\\_term=.1b337cbb3f31](https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/global-opinions/university-rejects-chinese-communist-party-linked-influence-efforts-on-campus/2018/01/14/c454b54e-f7de-11e7-beb6-c8d48830c54d_story.html?utm_term=.1b337cbb3f31)

- In 2014, both the University of Chicago and Pennsylvania State University ended their relationship with their Confucius Institutes.<sup>16</sup>
- Other leading international universities have also ended their relationships with the institutes, including Japan's Osaka Sangyo University, Canada's McMaster University and Universite de Sherbrooke, France's University of Lyon, Germany's Stuttgart Media University and University of Hohenheim, and Sweden's Stockholm University.<sup>17</sup>

In light of China's subversive behavior and malicious intent to suppress our American values of free expression, speech and debate, we respectfully and strongly urge you to prevent hosting a Confucius Institute or other agreements with Chinese government supported organizations. Should you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact our offices.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this extremely important matter.

Sincerely,



Michael T. McCaul

Member of Congress



Henry Cuellar

Member of Congress

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<sup>16</sup> Bernstein, Sharon. "Second U.S. University Cuts Ties with China's Confucius Institute." *Reuters*. 1 October 2014. <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-china-confucius-institute-pennsylv/second-u-s-university-cuts-ties-with-chinas-confucius-institute-idUSKCN0HQ4UZ20141001>

<sup>17</sup> Peterson, Rachelle. "American Universities are Welcoming China's Trojan Horse." *Foreign Policy*. 9 May 2017. <http://foreignpolicy.com/2017/05/09/american-universities-are-welcoming-chinas-trojan-horse-confucius-institutes/>