U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom Hearing

China's Religious Freedom Violations: Domestic Repression and Malign Influence Abroad

Opening Remarks as prepared for delivery

Abraham Cooper, USCIRF Vice Chair

Thank you, Chair Turkel and good morning, everyone. Thank you for joining us today.

Few countries in the world can match China's technologically sophisticated religious repression and its unique ability to assert malign influence over, and to extend repression into, other countries. In this regard, China presents a unique challenge to U.S. foreign policy and our national security interests. That harsh reality makes today's hearing especially timely and important, as it will address both China's technology-enabled domestic religious repression and its malign influence abroad.

As Chair Turkel mentioned, the U.S. government must do its part to ensure that our business community and trade policies do not contribute to religious freedom

violations in China, which remain systematic, ongoing, and egregious. We must make sure that U.S. companies do not export critical technologies that China could use in its techno-authoritarian repression of religious minorities. We also must make sure that products tainted by Uyghur forced labor are not imported into the U.S. market.

Furthermore, the U.S. government should use all legal and policy tools at its disposal to counter the Chinese government's malign foreign influence through its lobbying efforts and transnational repression activities in the United States, which harass and intimidate religious minorities from China. The U.S. government must also continue to work with like-minded international partners to hold the Chinese government accountable, including by imposing coordinated sanctions on Chinee officials and entities responsible for severe religious freedom violations and related human rights abuses.

With that, I look forward to a robust and fruitful discussion with our witnesses today. I will now turn it over to Commissioner Frank Wolf for his remarks.