

# Bipartisan Senators Introduce Bill Seeking Sanctions Against Hong Kong Officials

'In Hong Kong, the CCP has completely corrupted the local judiciary and is turning it into a tool of intimidation and injustice,' Sen. Dan Sullivan said.

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Sen. Dan Sullivan (R-Alaska) speaks during a hearing with the nominee for Commerce Secretary, Howard Lutnick, on Capitol Hill in Washington on Jan. 29, 2025. Madalina Vasiliu/The Epoch Times



By Frank Fang

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A bipartisan group of senators has introduced legislation requiring the Trump administration to address Hong Kong's dwindling

freedoms since its handover from the United Kingdom to the Chinese Communist Party (CCP).

Sens. Dan Sullivan (R-Alaska), incoming chairman of the Congressional-Executive Commission on China (CECC); Jeff Merkley (D-Ore.), co-chair of the CECC; and John Curtis (R-Utah) introduced the Hong Kong Judicial Sanctions Act ([S 1755](#)) on May 16.

The legislation requires the president to review whether 49 Hong Kong officials, including four who were [sanctioned](#) by the Treasury Department in 2020, committed human rights violations and should be sanctioned in accordance with the Global Magnitsky Human Rights Accountability Act, the Hong Kong Human Rights and Democracy Act of 2019, or the Hong Kong Autonomy Act.

“The Chinese Communist Party’s aggressive repression of dissent and appalling human rights record extend far beyond China’s borders. Even American citizens and others lawfully living in our country have found themselves victims of the CCP regime’s intimidation and coercion tactics,” Sullivan [said](#) in a statement.

“In Hong Kong, the CCP has completely corrupted the local judiciary and is turning it into a tool of intimidation and injustice, contrary to the promises made to the world, including in the Sino-British Joint Declaration. America must stand firmly against the CCP’s flagrant violation of the civil rights of the Chinese people and citizens of nations across the globe.”

The push for the legislation comes nearly four years since the CCP imposed its so-called [national security law](#) on Hong Kong, which punishes vaguely defined crimes, such as secession and subversion against the communist party, with a maximum penalty of life imprisonment. In March last year, the Hong Kong government passed an additional sweeping [national security law](#) known as Article 23.

As of Nov. 1, 2024, 304 had been arrested for national security offenses in Hong Kong, while 176 were charged and at least 167 convicted or awaiting sentencing, the British government stated in a [report](#) released in March, citing the Hong Kong Security Bureau.

The U.S. [bill](#) named Johnny Chan, Andrew Chan, and Alex Lee, who are three Hong Kong judges responsible for [handing down prison sentences](#) under the national security law against 45 pro-democracy activists in November last year. Benny Tai, a former University of Hong Kong law professor, received the harshest sentence of the rulings of 10 years.

Another judge named in the bill, Esther Toh, is [overseeing](#) the national security trial of British citizen Jimmy Lai, who is best known for being

the founder of the now-defunct newspaper Apple Daily.

Antony Chau, a Hong Kong government prosecutor [involved](#) in Lai's case, is also named in the bill.

Also on the bill's list are Hong Kong chief executive John Lee, who was the city's secretary for security when he was [sanctioned](#) by the U.S. Treasury Department in 2020, and Hong Kong chief justice Andrew Cheung.

"As Chinese officials continue to undermine the autonomy and freedoms of its peoples, the United States must continue to hold these officials accountable," Merkley said in a statement.

"Republicans and Democrats are united in sending a clear message that we will not tolerate this brutal oppression, both within China and outside its borders.

A spokesperson for the Hong Kong government issued a statement condemning the U.S. senators, saying the city government "despises any so-called 'sanctions' and shall never be intimidated."

The D.C.-based Committee for Freedom in Hong Kong (CFHK) Foundation welcomed the senators' effort.

"The U.S. government should implement Magnitsky and other sanctions on these Chinese and Hong Kong officials whom we know are engaging in repression against the people of Hong Kong," Jonathan Stivers, U.S. director of the CFHK Foundation, said in a [statement](#).

Stivers added that the Senate and the House should "act on this legislation as soon as possible."

A similar bill, named the Hong Kong Sanctions Act ([HR 733](#)), was [introduced](#) in January by Reps. Young Kim (R-Calif.) and Jim McGovern (D-Mass.). The House bill names 48 Hong Kong officials, many of whom are also on the Senate bill's list.

Separately, the three senators have also introduced a [resolution](#) condemning China for engaging in transnational repression by targeting critics of the Chinese regime in other countries, including the United States.

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