

116TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. RES. 552

Supporting an international investigation into the handling by the Government of the People's Republic of China of COVID-19 and the impact of handling COVID-19 in that manner on the people of the United States and other nations.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MARCH 24, 2020

Mr. HAWLEY (for himself, Ms. MCSALLY, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. COTTON) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations

RESOLUTION

Supporting an international investigation into the handling by the Government of the People's Republic of China of COVID-19 and the impact of handling COVID-19 in that manner on the people of the United States and other nations.

Whereas the novel coronavirus (referred to in this resolution as "COVID-19") emerged in the People's Republic of China and began to spread as early as November 2019;

Whereas, by late December, dozens of citizens of the People's Republic of China had fallen victim to COVID-19;

Whereas, on December 30, Wuhan, China health authorities identified, interrogated, and reprimanded multiple doc-

tors in response to their decisions to warn other Chinese citizens of the danger posed by that new disease;

Whereas, on January 1, 2020, the Wuhan Public Security Bureau questioned 8 Chinese doctors who had posted information about COVID–19 on WeChat;

Whereas, on January 1, the Hubei provincial health commission ordered laboratories to stop testing for COVID–19 and destroy samples of the same;

Whereas, on January 2, the Wuhan Institute of Virology mapped the genome of COVID–19 in order to inform development of public health interventions and medical treatments for COVID–19, but the Government of the People’s Republic of China withheld genetic information on COVID–19 until January 9;

Whereas, on January 11, the Wuhan municipal health commission insisted that there were no new cases of infection by COVID–19;

Whereas, on January 13, the first COVID–19 case outside of the People’s Republic of China was announced in Thailand;

Whereas, on January 14, the World Health Organization announced that the Government of the People’s Republic of China had seen “no clear evidence of human-to-human transmission of the novel coronavirus”;

Whereas, on January 23, the Government of the People’s Republic of China began to implement quarantine measures to stem the spread of COVID–19 at the same time as the disease had already begun to proliferate throughout the world;

Whereas, on March 11, the World Health Organization declared COVID–19 a global pandemic, with 118,000 per-

sons infected and 4,291 dead in 114 different countries at the time of the announcement;

Whereas the Government of the People’s Republic of China has argued recently that COVID–19 did not originate in the People’s Republic of China;

Whereas the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People’s Republic of China has alleged that the United States Army may have delivered COVID–19 to the city of Wuhan in the People’s Republic of China;

Whereas the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People’s Republic of China has said, “China’s endeavor to combating [sic] the epidemic has bought time for [international] preparedness”; and

Whereas a University of Southampton study found that earlier intervention by the Government of the People’s Republic of China could have “significantly” limited the geographic spread of COVID–19: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the Senate—

2 (1) condemns the decision by the Government
3 of the People’s Republic of China to hide the emer-
4 gence and spread of COVID–19 within its borders
5 during the initial weeks of the outbreak;

6 (2) assesses that the decision by the Govern-
7 ment of the People’s Republic of China to hide the
8 emergence and spread of COVID–19 during that pe-
9 riod almost certainly contributed to the rapid spread
10 of that disease throughout the Indo-Pacific region,
11 Europe, and the rest of the world;

1 (3) finds that the Government of the People’s
2 Republic of China should be held accountable for the
3 impact, of its decision to hide the emergence and
4 spread of COVID–19, on the lives and livelihoods of
5 the people of the United States and other nations;

6 (4) calls for an international investigation led
7 by public health officials from the United States and
8 other affected nations to determine how the handling
9 by the Government of the People’s Republic of
10 China of the COVID–19 outbreak prior to March
11 11, 2020, contributed to the emergence of the
12 COVID–19 global pandemic; and

13 (5) calls on the international community to—

14 (A) quantify the harm caused, by the han-
15 dling of the COVID–19 outbreak by the Gov-
16 ernment of the People’s Republic of China, to
17 the health and economic well-being of the peo-
18 ple of the United States and other nations; and

19 (B) design a mechanism for delivering
20 compensation from the Government of the Peo-
21 ple’s Republic of China to all affected nations
22 for the harm caused by its decision to hide the
23 emergence and spread of COVID–19 during the
24 initial weeks of the outbreak.

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