

[H. Res. 337, Calling for substantive dialogue, without preconditions, in order to address Tibetan grievances and secure a negotiated agreement for the Tibetan people, as amended](#)

**FLOOR SITUATION**

On Wednesday, July 8, 2015, the House will consider [H. Res. 337](#), *a resolution calling for substantive dialogue, without preconditions, in order to address Tibetan grievances and secure a negotiated agreement for the Tibetan people*, under suspension of the rules. H. Res. 337 was introduced on June 24, 2015, by Rep. Eliot Engel (D-NY) and was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

**SUMMARY**

H. Res. 337, as amended, resolves that the House of Representatives calls on the United States Government to fully implement certain sections of the Tibetan Policy Act of 2002 and encourages the Government of the People's Republic of China and His Holiness the Dalai Lama to hold substantive dialogue, without preconditions, to address Tibetan grievances and secure a negotiated agreement for the Tibetan people. The resolution also calls on the U.S. to more actively highlight Tibetan human rights and political and religious freedom concerns and reaffirms the unwavering friendship between the people of the United States and the people of Tibet.

**BACKGROUND**

The U.S. Department of State's Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2014 (China) noted that the Chinese government's "respect for, and protection of, human rights in the Tibet Autonomous Region and other Tibetan areas remained poor."<sup>1</sup> The Report highlighted that the Chinese government "engaged in the severe repression of Tibet's unique religious, cultural, and linguistic heritage by, among other means, strictly curtailing the civil rights of China's Tibetan population, including the freedoms of speech, religion, association, assembly, and movement."<sup>2</sup> The Report further added that "human rights abuses included extrajudicial killings, disappearances, torture, and extrajudicial detentions" and that many Tibetans believe "that authorities systemically targeted them

<sup>1</sup> See Department of State—"Country Report on Human Rights Practices for 2014 (China)" at Executive Summary.

<sup>2</sup> Id.

for political repression, economic marginalization, and cultural assimilation, as well as educational and employment discrimination.”<sup>3</sup>

According to the Congressional Research Service (CRS) “Congress has shown a strong interest in Tibet since the 1980s, passing dozens of laws and resolutions related to Tibet, speaking out about conditions in Tibet, and welcoming visits by the Dalai Lama and, more recently, the political head of the India-based Central Tibetan Administration [Tibet’s government-in-exile]. Such actions have long been a source of friction in the U.S.-China relationship. China charges that they amount to support for challenges to Chinese rule in Tibet.”<sup>4</sup> The Dalai Lama reiterated that he has “no desire to seek Tibet’s separation [from China]” ... but that he seeks to “ensure the survival of the Tibetan people’s distinctive culture, language, and identity.”<sup>5</sup>

U.S. policy on Tibet is governed by the Tibetan Policy Act of 2002, enacted by subtitle B of Title VI of the Foreign Relations Authorization Act of Fiscal Year 2003 ([Public Law 107-228](#)).

Provisions of the Tibetan Policy Act referenced in H. Res. 337 are as follows:

Section 613(a) states that the President and Secretary of State should encourage China to enter into a dialogue with the Dalai Lama or his representatives “leading to a negotiated agreement on Tibet.”

Section 616(b) directs the Secretary of Treasury to instruct the U.S. executive director of each international financial institution “to use the voice and vote of the United States to support projects in Tibet” as long as these projects meet specified requirements, including that such projects respect Tibetan culture, land-ownership, and self-sufficiency.

Section 618 urges the State Department to seek establishment of a U.S. Consulate in Lhasa.

Section 621(c) states that the “central objective of the Special Coordinator (a position created by the TPA to coordinate U.S. policy on Tibet and vigorously promote a number of U.S. principles with respect to human rights, religious freedom, political prisoners, and economic development projects) is “to promote substantive dialogue between the Government of the People’s Republic of China and the Dalai Lama or his representatives.”

Most U.S. Tibetan policy experts ascribe the lack of progress on the goals of the Tibetan Policy Act, such as the fact that a consulate has not been established in Lhasa, “to obstacles put in place by Beijing rather than failures in implementation on the U.S. side.”<sup>6</sup>

According to the bill sponsor, “Throughout his life, His Holiness, the 14th Dalai Lama, has championed greater understanding, harmony, and respect among all religious faiths. As the spiritual and temporal leader of the Tibetan people, he has been a model for all of us on the importance of preserving the cultural, religious, historical, and linguistic heritage—not just for the Tibetan people but for all people. His Holiness has done outstanding work to safeguard the environment in the Tibetan plateau, to promote democracy among the Tibetan people, and to champion non-violent conflict

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<sup>3</sup> Id.

<sup>4</sup> See CRS Report, [“The Tibetan Policy Act of 2002: Background and Implementation.”](#) November 5, 2014

<sup>5</sup> See CRS Report, “Tibet: Problems, Prospects, and U.S. Policy,” July 30, 2008

<sup>6</sup> See CRS Report, [“The Tibetan Policy Act of 2002: Background and Implementation.”](#) March 17, 2009

resolution . . . This resolution reaffirms the unwavering friendship between the Tibetan people and the United States.”<sup>7</sup>

### **COST**

There is no cost associated with passage of the resolution.

### **STAFF CONTACT**

For questions or further information please contact [Jerry White](#) with the House Republican Policy Committee by email or at 5-0190.

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<sup>7</sup> See Press Release, [“Engel, Salmon, Pitts, McGovern Resolution Calls for Settlement for Tibetan People.”](#) June 25, 2015