

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

December 13, 2018

The Honorable Mike Pompeo
Secretary of State
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street Northwest
Washington, DC, 20520

The Honorable Steven Mnuchin
Secretary of the Treasury
U.S. Department of the Treasury
1500 Pennsylvania Avenue Northwest
Washington, DC 20220

The Honorable Dan Coats
Director of National Intelligence
Office of the Director of National Intelligence
1500 Tysons McLean Drive
McLean, VA 22012

The Honorable Christopher Wray
Director
Federal Bureau of Investigation
935 Pennsylvania Avenue Northwest
Washington, DC, 20220

Dear Secretaries Pompeo and Mnuchin, Directors Coats and Wray:

We write with concern about allegations that the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) interfered in Taiwan's recent elections. CCP attempts to erode democratic processes and norms around the world threaten U.S. partnerships and prosperity. Allegations such as those surrounding Taiwan's recent elections must therefore be pursued with seriousness and urgency. We appreciate the actions your departments are already taking to address CCP foreign interference. We encourage you to work closely with Taiwan authorities to thoroughly investigate these allegations and, if necessary, take swift action to deter future CCP interference in elections in Taiwan or elsewhere across the globe.

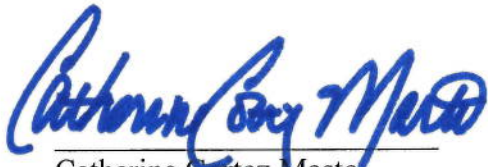
In the lead-up to Taiwan's local elections on November 24, 2018, Taiwan authorities and independent observers alleged that the CCP used illegal funds and disinformation to influence the election results in favor of the CCP's strategic interests. It is not our intent, nor our role, to question the veracity or fairness of the electoral outcome. Rather, in an era of growing authoritarian interference, we believe such allegations must be taken seriously if free societies are to continue to thrive. If true, CCP interference in Taiwan's elections would be deeply concerning not only for Taiwan's future, but also for fellow democracies around the world where the CCP may choose to interfere.

Taiwan authorities' statements suggest that illegal campaign contributions to pro-Beijing political candidates were one of the primary tools of alleged CCP interference. In October, Taiwan authorities announced that they were investigating 33 cases of alleged funding from China to political campaigns in Taiwan. If true, the donations would be in violation of Taiwan's Political Donations Act and the Act Governing Relations Between the People of the Taiwan Area and the Mainland Area. Indeed, Taiwan investigators reportedly conducted raids on two illicit money exchanges funneling money to pro-Beijing election activities in Taiwan. Authorities are also investigating allegations that CCP-linked individuals tried to bribe or coerce voters.

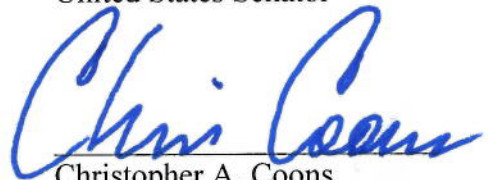
Taiwan authorities have also accused the CCP of using disinformation to shape public opinion of political candidates deemed unsympathetic to Beijing's interests. They allege the CCP spread false information through social media and messaging platforms, including Facebook, Line, and the online bulletin board, PTT. Some candidates have even claimed to possess evidence showing that these disinformation campaigns originated from mainland Chinese IP addresses.

As Deputy Assistant Secretary (DAS) of State Scott Busby said last month in Taiwan, "At a time of democratic backsliding and human rights abuses elsewhere in the Indo-Pacific region, Taiwan serves as an invaluable model to others. And given the challenges we all face, it is especially important that democracies like Taiwan and the United States stand together in promoting a brighter future, free of repression, censorship, and exploitation." In the spirit of DAS Busby's remarks, we write to express our support for efforts to counter interference of this nature and to state unequivocally that we stand shoulder to shoulder with democracies fighting attempts to undermine their sovereignty and freedom. We encourage your departments to do all you can to support Taiwan in investigating these allegations and taking necessary action in response.

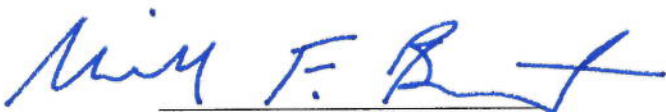
Sincerely,



Catherine Cortez Masto
United States Senator



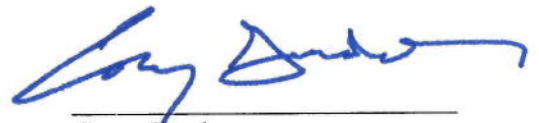
Christopher A. Coons
United States Senator



Michael F. Bennet
United States Senator



Marco Rubio
United States Senator



Cory Gardner
United States Senator



Ted Cruz
United States Senator