

## Virus Outbreak: US lawmakers rally support for Taiwan

Written by Taipei Times  
Sunday, 10 May 2020 06:30 -

---



The WHO headquarters is pictured in Geneva, Switzerland, on Jan. 22.

**Photo: EPA-EFE**

Bipartisan members of the US Congress on Friday wrote to leaders of more than 50 countries urging them to support Taiwan's participation at the upcoming World Health Assembly (WHA), adding that the WHO has repeatedly refused to accept monetary donations directly from Taiwan.

The move is significant, as it is the first time that US lawmakers have written directly to foreign government leaders to rally support for Taiwan's WHA bid, Ministry of Foreign Affairs spokeswoman Joanne Ou (歐陽) said, thanking the US lawmakers for their support.

The 73rd session of the WHA, the decisionmaking body of the WHO, is to meet virtually on May 18 and 19.

Taiwan participated in the WHA as an observer from 2009 to 2016, but has not been invited since.

Although the US in 1979 cut ties with Taiwan and switched recognition to China, the US administration and Congress have recently used different means to rally support for Taiwan's WHA bid, including a "TweetforTaiwan" campaign launched by the US Department of State this month.

In their letter, the US lawmakers urged other governments "to join the US and a growing number of countries in calling for an end to the government of the People's Republic of China's efforts to exclude Taiwan from international organizations, especially the World Health Organization."

## Virus Outbreak: US lawmakers rally support for Taiwan

Written by Taipei Times  
Sunday, 10 May 2020 06:30 -

---

The letter was signed by US House of Representatives Committee on Foreign Affairs Chairman Eliot Engel and US Senate Committee on Foreign Relations Chairman James Risch.

Noting China's pressuring of the WHO and other international organizations to exclude Taiwan, the letter said that "such blatant prioritization of Beijing's political interests over the health and safety of Taiwan and the rest of the world has grave consequences."

"Moreover, the WHO has on multiple occasions refused to accept monetary donations directly from Taiwan or to identify a mutually acceptable third-party organization to act as an intermediary," it added.

"No member state, China included, should be allowed to manipulate UN materials, statements, or positions in ways that do not accurately reflect UN policy and are inconsistent with the policies of many UN member states," it read.

The recipient countries included Belgium, Canada, the Czech Republic, Germany, Italy, Japan, New Zealand, Singapore, South Korea, Switzerland, Thailand, the UK, the Vatican and Taiwan's diplomatic allies, the US House Committee on Foreign Affairs said in a news briefing.

Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe have voiced support for Taiwan's bid to join the WHA as an observer in statements in their respective parliaments earlier this year.

At a news briefing on Friday, Trudeau also thanked Taiwan for its donation of 500,000 medical masks amid the COVID-19 pandemic, one day after Canadian Minister of Foreign Affairs Francois-Philippe Champagne avoided specifically thanking Taiwan for the donation.

"I'm happy to thank Taiwan for its generous donation. It is important at this point that Canadians and all people around the world pull together to be there for each other, because this is a global challenge that is going to face a global response. We need to do this together and we will," Trudeau said in response to media queries.

## **Virus Outbreak: US lawmakers rally support for Taiwan**

Written by Taipei Times  
Sunday, 10 May 2020 06:30 -

---

Taiwan thanked the Canadian government for its continuous support for its participation in multilateral organizations and anticipates a deepening of bilateral partnerships in various areas, Ou said.

Source: [Taipei Times - 2020/05/10](#)