ASSEMBLY CONCURRENT RESOLUTION No. 180

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED JUNE 15, 2020

Sponsored by:
Assemblyman JOHN CATALANO
District 10 (Ocean)
Assemblyman GREGORY P. MCGUCKIN
District 10 (Ocean)

SYNOPSIS

Urges President and Congress to enact legislation allowing states to sue China for mishandling COVID-19 outbreak.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION urging the United States President and Congress to enact legislation allowing states to sue the People's Republic of China for mishandling the COVID-19 outbreak.

WHEREAS, COVID-19 is a novel coronavirus that has caused a global pandemic leading to an unprecedented and overwhelming public health crisis; and

WHEREAS, Worldwide, there have been approximately 6 million confirmed cases of COVID-19 and over 350,000 deaths; and

WHEREAS, The United States has the highest incidence of COVID-19 infections and deaths worldwide; and

WHEREAS, The State of New Jersey has the second highest incidence of COVID-19 in the United States; and

WHEREAS, In the fight against COVID-19, the United States has committed various resources, but still has confirmed nearly 1.7 million confirmed cases and 100,000 deaths; and

WHEREAS, In a global economy, actions or inactions taken by one country have resounding effects across every other nation; and

WHEREAS, The People’s Republic of China (PRC) has been accused of making intentional misrepresentations to the World Health Organization (WHO), advising the organization that there was no need for any precautions pertaining to COVID-19, despite knowing that the disease was deadly and highly contagious as early as mid-January 2020; and

WHEREAS, The misrepresentations made by the PRC enabled the coronavirus to spread viciously throughout the United States and around the globe; and

WHEREAS, Several countries, including the United Kingdom, Germany, and Australia, have filed complaints and called for compensation from the Chinese government to cover losses incurred by the COVID-19 pandemic; and

WHEREAS, States, such as Missouri, have already brought suit against the Chinese government for the role the country played in the worsening the COVID-19 pandemic and the effects the pandemic has had throughout the United States and within individual states; and

WHEREAS, Missouri’s suit alleges that China failed to disclose information, silenced whistleblowers and did little to stop the spread of the disease, leading to an extensive loss of human life and health, and a massive economic disruption across the world; and

WHEREAS, United States Congressman Chris Smith introduced H.R. 6524 on April 17, 2020, a bill to allow United States citizens and local governments to sue the government of China and hold the country accountable for the deaths, pain and suffering and economic losses which resulted from its intentional misrepresentations to the WHO which enabled the coronavirus to

spread viciously throughout the United States and around the globe; and

WHEREAS, The ability to hold the PRC legally accountable for losses caused by COVID-19 would allow Americans to recover some of what they have due to the country's mishandling during the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED *by the General Assembly of the State of New Jersey (the Senate concurring):*

1. The Legislature urges the United States President and Congress to enact legislation allowing states to sue the People's Republic of China for the mishandling of COVID-19 so as to hold the country responsible for the deaths, and pain and suffering experienced by United States citizens.

2. Copies of this resolution, as filed with the Secretary of State, shall be transmitted by the Clerk of the General Assembly or the Secretary of the Senate to the Office of the President of the United States, the Majority and Minority Leaders of the United State Senate, the Speaker and Minority Leader of the United States House of Representatives, and every member of Congress from this State.

STATEMENT

This resolution urges the United States President and Congress to enact legislation allowing states to sue the People's Republic of China (PRC) for the mishandling of COVID-19.

COVID-19, a novel coronavirus, has caused a global pandemic leading to an unprecedented and overwhelming public health crisis, including approximately 6 million confirmed cases and over 350,000 deaths. The United States has the highest incidence of COVID-19 infections and deaths worldwide, while the State of New Jersey has the second highest incidence of COVID-19 in the United States. In its fight against COVID-19, the United States has committed various resources, but still has confirmed nearly 1.7 million confirmed cases and 100,000 deaths.

In a global economy, every action or inaction taken by one country has a resounding effect across every other nation. The PRC has been accused of making intentional misrepresentations to the World Health Organization (WHO), advising the organization that there was no need for any precautions, despite knowing full well that COVID19 was deadly, and highly contagious as early as mid-January 2020. The misrepresentations made by the PRC enabled the coronavirus to spread rapidly and viciously across the United States and around the globe.

Several countries, including the United Kingdom, Germany, and Australia, have filed complaints and called for compensation from the Chinese government to cover the losses incurred by the COVID-19 pandemic. States, such as Missouri, have also already brought suit against the Chinese government for the role the country played in the worsening COVID-19 pandemic and the effects the pandemic has had throughout the United States and within individual states. In it is suit, Missouri alleges that China failed to disclose information, silenced whistleblowers and did little to stop the spread of the disease, leading to a massive loss of human life and health and an enormous economic disruption across the world.

United States Congressman Chris Smith introduced legislation on April 17, 2020, that would allow United States citizens and local governments to sue the government of the PRC and hold the country accountable for the deaths, pain and suffering, and economic losses resulting from its intentional misrepresentations to the WHO which enabled the coronavirus to spread across the globe. The ability to hold the PRC accountable for the deaths, and pain and suffering would allow Americans to recover some of what they have lost due to the PRC's mishandling during the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic.