

**SENATE CONCURRENT
RESOLUTION No. 116**

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED JUNE 4, 2020

Sponsored by:

Senator JAMES W. HOLZAPFEL

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.



1 **A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION** urging the United States President
2 and Congress to enact legislation allowing states to sue the
3 People's Republic of China for mishandling the COVID-19
4 outbreak.
5
6 **WHEREAS**, COVID-19 is a novel coronavirus that has caused a global
7 pandemic leading to an unprecedented and overwhelming public
8 health crisis; and
9 **WHEREAS**, Worldwide, there have been approximately 6 million
10 confirmed cases of COVID-19 and over 350,000 deaths; and
11 **WHEREAS**, The United States has the highest incidence of COVID-19
12 infections and deaths worldwide; and
13 **WHEREAS**, The State of New Jersey has the second highest incidence
14 of COVID-19 in the United States; and
15 **WHEREAS**, In the fight against COVID-19, the United States has
16 committed various resources, but still has confirmed nearly 1.7
17 million confirmed cases and 100,000 deaths; and
18 **WHEREAS**, In a global economy, actions or inactions taken by one
19 country have resounding effects across every other nation; and
20 **WHEREAS**, The People's Republic of China (PRC) has been accused
21 of making intentional misrepresentations to the World Health
22 Organization (WHO), advising the organization that there was no
23 need for any precautions pertaining to COVID-19, despite knowing
24 that the disease was deadly and highly contagious as early as mid-
25 January 2020; and
26 **WHEREAS**, The misrepresentations made by the PRC enabled the
27 coronavirus to spread viciously throughout the United States and
28 around the globe; and
29 **WHEREAS**, Several countries, including the United Kingdom,
30 Germany, and Australia, have filed complaints and called for
31 compensation from the Chinese government to cover losses
32 incurred by the COVID-19 pandemic; and
33 **WHEREAS**, States, such as Missouri, have already brought suit against
34 the Chinese government for the role the country played in the
35 worsening the COVID-19 pandemic and the effects the pandemic
36 has had throughout the United States and within individual states;
37 and
38 **WHEREAS**, Missouri's suit alleges that China failed to disclose
39 information, silenced whistleblowers and did little to stop the
40 spread of the disease, leading to an extensive loss of human life and
41 health, and a massive economic disruption across the world; and
42 **WHEREAS**, United States Congressman Chris Smith introduced H.R.
43 6524 on April 17, 2020, a bill to allow United States citizens and
44 local governments to sue the government of China and hold the
45 country accountable for the deaths, pain and suffering and
46 economic losses which resulted from its intentional
47 misrepresentations to the WHO which enabled the coronavirus to

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

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

7
8 **BE IT RESOLVED** by the Senate of the State of New Jersey (the
9 General Assembly concurring):

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

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

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25 STATEMENT

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

30 COVID-19, a novel coronavirus, has caused a global pandemic
31 leading to an unprecedented and overwhelming public health crisis,
32 including approximately 6 million confirmed cases and over
33 350,000 deaths. The United States has the highest incidence of
34 COVID-19 infections and deaths worldwide, while the State of New
35 Jersey has the second highest incidence of COVID-19 in the United
36 States. In its fight against COVID-19, the United States has
37 committed various resources, but still has confirmed nearly 1.7
38 million confirmed cases and 100,000 deaths.

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

1 Several countries, including the United Kingdom, Germany, and
2 Australia, have filed complaints and called for compensation from
3 the Chinese government to cover the losses incurred by the COVID-
4 19 pandemic. States, such as Missouri, have also already brought
5 suit against the Chinese government for the role the country played
6 in the worsening COVID-19 pandemic and the effects the pandemic
7 has had throughout the United States and within individual states.
8 In it is suit, Missouri alleges that China failed to disclose
9 information, silenced whistleblowers and did little to stop the
10 spread of the disease, leading to a massive loss of human life and
11 health and an enormous economic disruption across the world.

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