



INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR TIBET

Momentum visible at Tibet Lobby Day 2019

<https://www.savetibet.org/momentum-visible-at-tibet-lobby-day-2019/>

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If there's one thing Tibet Lobby Day 2019 showed, it's that there's new and undeniable momentum in the effort to bring human rights and democratic freedoms to Tibet.

After a year in which the most important Tibet-related legislation in more than 15 years was signed into law, a larger-than-usual number of participants took part in the lobby day, which brought nearly 150 Tibetan-Americans and Tibet supporters from 24 states to Washington, DC on March 25 and 26, 2019.

In the nation's capital, the participants met with members of Congress and their staff to request their support for programs and policies that help the Tibetan people.

The amateur lobbyists asked legislators to do three specific things:

- Sign on to a letter to Sec. of State Mike Pompeo expressing deep concern about the well-being of the Tibetan people under Chinese rule and calling on Sec. Pompeo to fully implement the Reciprocal Access to Tibet Act of 2018 and the Tibetan Policy Act of 2002.
- Advocate for Tibetan prisoners of conscience and for religious freedom for Tibetans.
- Support funding for Tibet-related programs in the Department of State and the Foreign Operations Appropriations bill.

Many participants reported that Congress members and congressional staff responded positively to their requests and assured them that they would continue to support Tibet.

In addition to those who came to Washington, DC, several thousand more activists took part in the event online.

Matteo Mecacci, president of the International Campaign for Tibet (ICT), attributed this year's higher turnout in part to the success of the Reciprocal Access to Tibet Act (RATA), which was signed into law in December 2018 as the most significant Tibet legislation since the Tibetan Policy Act of 2002.

On Monday evening, March 25, the participants gathered at ICT headquarters for a dinner at which Mecacci informed them that, earlier in the day, the State Department released a powerful report on access to Tibet. The report, which was the first of its kind, was a requirement of RATA.

"There has been undeniable progress over the past few months in advancing US support for the Tibetan cause, and that momentum was on full display at Tibet Lobby Day 2019," Mecacci said. "We are so grateful to everyone from all over the United States who took part in this crucial event. It's because of this kind of lobbying that we've reached this point in the first place, and we look forward to continuing to work with all supporters of Tibet to achieve even more progress in the rest of 2019."