
Berman Delegation Affirms United States and Taiwan Partnership, Discusses Regional Issues with Leadership

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House Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman Howard L. Berman (D-CA) and a bipartisan congressional delegation met with high-level officials in Taiwan today as part of a visit to the region that has included Beijing and Seoul. The subjects of the group's meetings ranged from copyright piracy to combating the spread of nuclear weapons.

Delegation members expressed their condolences to the people of Taiwan in the wake of Typhoon Morakot.

The loss of life and destruction of property from the typhoon have been devastating, Berman said. We stand in solidarity with the Taiwanese people as they undertake the painstaking process of recovery. And we stand ready to advocate further assistance for the recovery process from the United States.

The delegation met with President Ma Ying-jeou, National Security Council Secretary General Su Chi, Minister of Foreign Affairs Francisco Ou, Legislative Yuan President Wang Jin-Pyng, and Taiwan Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) Chair Tsai Ing-wen to discuss relations between Washington and Taipei.

The United States and Taiwan share an enduring partnership based on common values and interests, including democracy and safeguarding peace and security in the region, Berman said.

Congress laid that foundation with the *Taiwan Relations Act*; and we are here, in part, to reaffirm our steadfast support for that partnership.

We are encouraged by the improving relationship between Taipei and Beijing, Berman noted. The resumption of dialogue, the groundbreaking agreements to allow direct charter flights between Taiwan and China, and Taiwan's participation as an observer at the World Health Assembly meetings this past May are evidence of the substantial progress that has been made and augur well for progress to come.

On the subject of intellectual property rights, Berman urged leaders in the Legislative Yuan to amend the *Copyright Act* to make internet piracy for profit a "public crime"—just as a 2003 amendment to that legislation criminalized illicit copying of optical discs such as CDs and DVDs. Copying of such discs without permission has slumped off since then, while there has been a dramatic increase in downloading of sound recordings from the internet in Taiwan in violation of their copyrights.