

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

January 18, 2022

The Honorable Cheryl L. Johnson
Clerk of the U.S. House of Representatives
U.S. Capitol, Room H-154
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Sonceria Ann Berry
Secretary of the U.S. Senate
U.S. Capitol, Room S-312
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Ms. Johnson and Ms. Berry:

Recent news reports have shed light on attempts by Hangzhou Hikvision Digital Technology Company (Hikvision), a Chinese state-controlled video surveillance firm, to use the offices of the House Clerk and Secretary of the Senate to bully IP Video Market Info Inc. (IPVM), an American publisher, into silence for its unfavorable reporting about the company.¹ Congressional ethics must always be maintained to the highest standards. However, we urge you to not allow our transparent and open system to be cynically exploited by firms like Hikvision, which has been sanctioned by the U.S. government for its implication “in human rights violations and abuses in the implementation of China's campaign of repression, mass arbitrary detention, and high-technology surveillance against Uighurs, Kazakhs, and other members of Muslim minority groups in the XUAR.”²

As you may know, IPVM has conducted several thorough investigations exposing Hikvision and other companies' involvement in the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) mass detention and surveillance of Uyghur populations in China's Xinjiang region.³ These findings, including on Hikvision's creation of “ethnic sorting” features for its surveillance products, provided critical information to Congress and Federal Agencies, including the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), which recently added Hikvision to its “Covered List” of high-risk equipment and services.⁴ Now, with the enactment of the *Secure Equipment Act* (P.L. 117-55), which effectively allows the FCC to bar the importation or sale of any new products from companies such as Hikvision regardless of funding source, the firm is attempting to subvert the law by attacking the integrity of its critics, using a cohort of American legal and public relations firms to do its bidding. Congress must not fall victim to its dishonest scheme.

As Chinese state-backed and -directed firms continue to feel pressure from various sanctions first implemented under the Trump Administration, Hikvision's efforts to silence dissent using your offices will likely be replicated by other malign entities tied to the CCP. Congress should take no part in these efforts. We urge your respective offices to see Hikvision's smear campaign against IPVM for what it is worth and to remain vigilant against future attempts to use your offices as a mechanism to chill free speech and silence dissent.

¹ <https://www.axios.com/chinese-surveillance-firm-us-regulators-63d7a6f2-5d62-4c05-9a92-6bd0a2bbf1db.html>

² <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2019/10/09/2019-22210/addition-of-certain-entities-to-the-entity-list>

³ <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-china-tech-surveillance-trfn/china-found-using-surveillance-firms-to-help-write-ethnic-tracking-specs-idUSKBN2BM1EE>

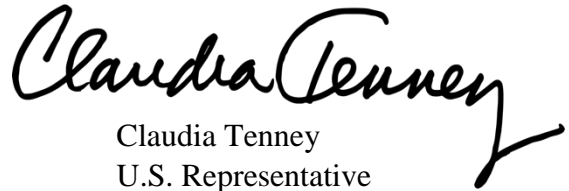
⁴ <https://www.fcc.gov/supplychain/coveredlist>

Thank you for your prompt attention to this critical matter.

Sincerely,



Marco Rubio
U.S. Senator



Claudia Tenney
U.S. Representative