Representative Wilmeth Takes Aim at Use of Forced Labor of Ethnic Uyghurs in Communist China

STATE CAPITOL, PHOENIX – State Representative Justin Wilmeth has sponsored bipartisan legislation that would help combat the use of forced labor in China. HB 2488 requires that the state and other public entities in Arizona may not enter into a contract with a company for products or services unless the contract includes written certification that the company does not, and will not, use or rely on the forced labor of ethnic Uyghurs in the People’s Republic of China (PRC).

“As a student of history, I know what happens when good people remain silent,” said Representative Wilmeth. “The Chinese Communist Party keeping millions of people locked in internment camps, which harkens back to the darkest chapters of the 20th century. HB 2488 sends a strong message that the State of Arizona won’t do business with anyone that turns a blind eye to this horrible human rights abuse.”

According to the Congressional Research Service, the PRC government has pressured many Uyghurs, including former detainees, into accepting employment in textile, apparel, agricultural, consumer electronics, and other labor-intensive industries. Some factories utilizing Uyghur labor are tied to global supply chains. Uyghurs who refuse to accept such employment, which often involves heavy surveillance and political indoctrination, may face detention.

HB 2488 is cosponsored by Representatives Biasucci, Bolick, Carroll, Chaplik, Kaiser, Longdon, Martinez, Nguyen, and Shah.

Justin Wilmeth is a Republican member of the Arizona House of Representatives serving Legislative District 15, which includes North Phoenix and Cave Creek. Follow him on Twitter at @JustinWilmethAZ.

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