



September 6, 2024

The Honorable Mike Johnson
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
H-232, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries
Democratic Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
H-204, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Johnson and Leader Jeffries:

CC: Representatives Aguilar, Clark, Emmer, Lieu, Neguse, Palmer, Scalise, and Stefanik

We are writing to express deep concern regarding the upcoming “China week,” which is slated for later this month. On July 8, 2024, Speaker Johnson gave a speech at the Hudson Institute, previewing that his goal is for Congress to send the White House a significant package of China-related legislation by the end of the year; since then, congressional leaders and the media alike anticipated this series of votes to take place in September during this so-called “China week.”¹ While we do not object to allotting time on the congressional calendar to bundle pressing national security concerns posed by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), we caution against framing such a time as “China week.”

As a leading civil rights organization, Asian Americans Advancing Justice | AAJC believes that this framing can beget belligerent rhetoric which could result in harm done to the Asian American and Asian immigrant community. For example, Speaker Johnson has called on the House to vote on this series of U.S.-China foreign policy bills to ensure that the next administration is equipped to “hit our enemies’ economies on day one.” He went on to say that “Beijing is our number one foreign threat,” and that “...we can retake the summit or respect, and reinstate fear in our enemies...” To be clear, this zero-sum and adversarial framework can pour fuel on existing racial animus and result in discrimination and profiling against those of Asian, particularly Chinese, descent.

We urge you to temper your language when speaking about pending U.S.-China legislation. Although the U.S. federal government should continue to hold the CCP accountable for acts detrimental to the U.S. economy, national security, and democracy, we must also be careful to do so in a nuanced manner that doesn’t single out minority groups.

Sincerely,

John C. Yang
President and Executive Director

¹ Speaker Mike Johnson on the Threats to the US-Led World Order, the Hudson Institute, July 8, 2024, <https://www.hudson.org/events/speaker-mike-johnson-threats-us-led-world-order-rebeccah-heinrichs>; Johanna Costigan, Congress Wants to Cut Off China-Made Drones, Even Though They Save Lives, Forbes September 5, 2024, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/johannacostigan/2024/09/05/congress-wants-to-cut-off-china-made-drones-even-though-they-save-lives/>.