

RES26-216
Testimony

MISC. COMM. 418

COUNCIL

COUNCIL Meeting

Meeting Date: Oct 7, 2026 @ 10:00 AM

Support: 0

Oppose: 3

I wish to comment: 0

Name: Jacob Wiencek	Email: jacob.m.wiencek@pm.me	Zip: 96815
Representing: Self	Position: Oppose	Submitted: Oct 5, 2026 @ 07:12 PM

Testimony:

Aloha Councilmembers,

Honolulu has a rich, multi-cultural heritage that is worth expanding, not just preserving. So many people from across the world have called our island home. We are all part of the rich story of Honolulu's past, present, and future. Resolution 26-216 does not honor or enhance that lineage.

The Maritime Silk Road project is a key element of the Chinese Communist Party's global malign influence and economic coercion campaign. Debt-trap diplomacy is a hallmark of this economic campaign, evidenced by the destabilization of Cambodia and Sri Lanka. CCP malign influence distorts the reality of the ongoing cultural genocide against Tibet and the genocide against Uyghur Muslims. Oppression of Christians is also well documented throughout CCP-controlled China.

I strongly urge the Council to REJECT this "gift"! Say NO to CCP oppression!

Name: Michael Wang	Email: michaelwang56@hotmail.com	Zip: 96813
Representing: Self	Position: Oppose	Submitted: Oct 6, 2026 @ 08:41 AM

Testimony:

TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION TO RESOLUTION 26-216

Dear Chair and Members of the Honolulu City Council:

I am writing to strongly oppose Resolution 26-216, which would allow Councilmember Radiant Cordero and a staff member to accept approximately \$4,000 in travel and related expenses from the Fuzhou Municipal People's Government to attend the 2026 Maritime Silk Road International Cultural Tourism Festival in Fuzhou, China.

As someone originally from China who has firsthand knowledge of the Chinese government and its methods of building political and social influence, I am deeply concerned about the implications of accepting travel, hospitality, and other benefits directly from a Chinese government entity.

I do not believe this should be viewed simply as a cultural exchange or tourism opportunity. The Chinese government has used the Belt and Road Initiative, including the Maritime Silk Road, not only as an economic and cultural program, but also as a means of expanding China's international influence and developing relationships with political, business, and

community leaders in other countries.

From my experience and understanding of China, government-sponsored invitations of this kind should be examined carefully. Such trips can provide opportunities for extensive hospitality, controlled tours, political messaging, and relationship-building. Visitors may be exposed to a carefully managed presentation of China while having limited opportunity to see or understand perspectives that are critical of the Chinese government.

There is also a serious concern about the appearance of undue influence. When a foreign government pays for an American elected official's travel, accommodations, and related expenses, the public has a legitimate right to ask what that foreign government expects in return and whether the official's future decisions could be influenced, consciously or unconsciously, by the relationship created through the trip.

This concern is particularly important in Hawai'i, where there are longstanding cultural and family connections with China and a significant Chinese-American community. Those connections should be respected. However, cultural ties should not become a reason to lower our standards regarding foreign-government influence over elected officials.

The issue is not whether Honolulu should have cultural exchanges with China. The issue is whether an elected official of the City and County of Honolulu should accept substantial travel benefits directly from a foreign government.

I believe the answer should be NO.

Honolulu's elected officials have a responsibility first and foremost to the people of Hawai'i and the United States. They should not put themselves in a position where a foreign government can provide significant hospitality and benefits and then develop a personal or political relationship with them.

If an official believes that participation in this event provides a legitimate public benefit, the City should consider whether the trip should instead be independently funded, transparently approved, and conducted under clear rules that protect the official from foreign-government influence.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Honolulu City Council to VOTE NO on Resolution 26-216.

Foreign governments should not be given an easy opportunity to cultivate relationships with Honolulu's elected officials through government-funded travel and hospitality. Protecting Hawai'i from foreign political influence requires transparency, independence, and caution.

Thank you for considering my testimony.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Wang

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96707

Representing:

Self

Position:

Oppose

Submitted:

Oct 6, 2026 @ 01:50 PM

Testimony:

Vote to oppose this resolution