

Good News for our friends, we have a new Republican Speaker of the House

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I want to report to my many friends in Japan that we have a new Republican Speaker of the House coming in, Kevin McCarthy. I had a chance today to be up meeting with Congressman Gallagher who is going to be the chairman of the brand new select committee on Communist China. We spent over an hour talking about what's happening with Communist China, our commitments on Taiwan, but also the bigger issue of dealing with communism and stopping the entire flow of communist effort which tries to penetrate the United States, tries to penetrate Japan, and is pervasive around the world. It's a major, major challenge for all of the free nations of the world.

I can tell you that the Republicans in the new house majority are going to be very committed to working with Japan, the Republic of Korea, Taiwan, Australia and our other allies to provide strength and stability in East Asia. Because we realize that containing the dictatorship in Beijing is a big job and is going to require all of us. This leads us to a real concern for communist efforts to penetrate around the world.

The other great issue that I think is going to be very significant with the Republicans in the House is religious liberty. Which is why it was important recently that we had a letter that had been signed by Ambassador Brownback, who you may remember was originally a member of the House, and then became a governor and then ultimately became an Ambassador for Religious Liberty. He signed a letter, along with a number of other people from the International Freedom Roundtable to the Japanese government expressing real concern about the law which was passed recently which would cut off donations to religious organizations. There was a deep feeling, as expressed in that letter, that that law is probably unconstitutional, because the Japanese constitution does provide very strong protection for freedom of religion.

So, you're going to find, I think, that this brand-new Republican congress committed to military and other strength in East Asia and committed to working around the world on issues that involve religious freedom. And I think this is a very important thing for us to consider.

As I mentioned in a recent op-ed piece, there is now a growing concern in America that the attacks on religious freedom in Japan directed toward the Unification Church by the Japanese Communist party are aimed to weaken the LDP and hurt the Japan-United States relationship.

We believe that the current attacks and calls for outstanding LDP members to resign from cabinet posts are designed to hurt the Abe legacy, to weaken the LDP, to drive a wedge between the United States and Japan.

I wanted to share with you, with this new Republican Congress, there are going to be allies for those in Japan who are anti-communist and who favor a free safe Japan and who do not want to see Beijing dominate the region.

I look forward to visiting you and to continuing this conversation about one of the most important issues of our time.