

Memorandum

To: Leon Botstein, President, Bard College
Taun Toay, Chief Financial Officer, Bard College
From: El Soucy, Julia Marmor, students of HR 105
Date: 11 December 2020

We hope this message finds you well. We are writing to address Bard's possible involvement in economic ties to the oppression of the Muslim Uyghur population in Xinjiang, China. The Chinese government has engaged in disappearing prominent scholars of the region and placing them in detention centers, "re-education camps," and prisons. These centers have significant economic connections to a multitude of global brands prominent in the United States. Our Human Rights Advocacy class has been studying the situation in Xinjiang, alongside classes from all over the OSUN network. As our class gathers information on this human rights crisis, we have noticed the global connections and influence of larger economic entities involved in "re-education" and Uyghur forced labor in Xinjiang.

We write to you to request the school's financial and investment ties be examined to ensure we are not involved with any company on the [End Uyghur Forced Labor list](#), a compilation of brands and economic entities known to use Uyghur and Turkic Muslim forced labor in production, or those that do not disclose their supply chain and maintain possible ties to the region's camps. Among these brands is Nike, a company from which our school purchases sportswear in the athletic department. As students at Bard, we mean to ensure the education we receive is not involved in any of these abuses.

It is crucial that an academic institution such as Bard, which prides itself on its international connections and global effect, takes an introspective approach to seeing just what those effects currently entail. The moral authority of our school must be considered, should we be connected financially to companies complicit with what is happening in East Turkestan/Xinjiang Autonomous Region, seeing as much of the violence and abuses are targeted at fellow scholars.

Our class has been studying the fate of Uyghur scholars. We have focused on Rahile Dawut, professor of Uyghur Studies and Ethnomusicology at Xinjiang University, who has been disappeared from her daughter, Akeda, since 2017. Dawut has most likely been placed in some sort of re-education, labour, or detention camp, one that could be supplying Bard's athleticwear. As an academic community, we must ensure that we are not complicit in the forced labor, abuse, or imprisonment of scholars like Rahile Dawut. As you are aware, OSUN has just named Rahile Dawut an honorary professor, a major success for our class's campaign.

For further information on Uyghur Forced Labor, see the [End Uyghur Forced Labor](#) initiative page. For more detailed information regarding missing scholar Rahile Dawut, see this article from [The Diplomat](#). Please contact the financial team of HR 105's campaign to release Rahile Dawut if you have any questions. We look forward to hearing from you.

Financial Team Contacts:

Julia Marmor: jm9178@bard.edu

El Soucy: lc8208@bard.edu