



This Week in the Office of Senator Marco Rubio

Today, I named Haynes Security Services, Inc., of the Liberty City Community in Miami, Florida as the U.S. Senate Small Business of the Week. Watch my video message [here](#).



Senate Small Biz 
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Chairman [@marcorubio](#), named Haynes Security Services, Inc. as the U.S. Senate Small Business of the Week. [#smallbiz](#) [#sayfie](#)



On Tuesday, the U.S. Senate voted, 77-to-23, to pass my legislation, the [Strengthening America's Security in the Middle East Act of 2019 \(S. 1\)](#). Ahead of the vote, I penned an op-ed for *The New York Times* discussing the myths and facts about my bill and the truth behind the B.D.S. Movement. Read more [here](#).

Opinion

Marco Rubio: The Truth About B.D.S. and the Lies About My Bill

The goal of the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions movement is to eliminate any Jewish state between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea.

On Thursday, Representative Ted Yoho (R-FL) and I applauded the U.S. Department of Commerce decision to withdraw from the flawed 2013 Suspension Agreement on Fresh Tomatoes from Mexico. This decision has allowed for unfair competition that has put U.S. tomato growers out of business. Read more [here](#).

“I applaud Secretary Ross and his team at the Department of Commerce for sending a strong message that the U.S. will ensure vigilant enforcement of our existing trade laws and trade agreements,” **said Rubio**. “Fairly traded imports can and do enrich Americans’ lives, but we must be clear with our trade partners that unfair trade practices that threaten American livelihoods will not be tolerated. During the ninety day notice period, I urge the Department to carefully monitor Mexican tomato imports and to take action to terminate the agreement prior to May 7th should such action be warranted. I thank Representative Yoho for his leadership and support to ensure the U.S. tomato industry does not continue to suffer from unfair competition.”

On Tuesday, I invited Venezuelan Chargé d’affaires Carlos Vecchio as my guest to President Trump’s State of the Union Address. Read more [here](#).

“For years, Carlos witnessed first-hand the Maduro regime’s repression and egregious human rights abuses,” **Rubio said**. “Since living in exile from 2014, Vecchio has been a tireless advocate for the restoration of democracy and freedom of his beloved homeland. I’m honored to host the Venezuelan Embassy’s Chargé d’affaires in the Capitol on Tuesday, and I anticipate President Trump will reemphasize his Administration’s stance against tyrannical leaders in Latin America and in support of the people of Venezuela.”

Antes del Estado de la Unión, el embajador Vecchio y yo hablamos con Carla Angola de *EVTV Miami* sobre la crisis en Venezuela y la importancia de continuar ayudando al pueblo Venezolano con ayuda humanitaria, un esfuerzo internacional en apoyo al Presidente Provisional Guaidó. Vea la entrevista con *EVTV Miami* [aquí](#).



On Tuesday, Senators Van Hollen (D-MD), Susan Collins (R-ME), Mark Warner (D-VA), Jerry Moran (R-KS), Elizabeth Warren (D-MA), Doug Jones (D-AL), and I re-introduced the ZTE Enforcement Review and Oversight (ZERO) Act. This legislation would hold Chinese state-directed telecommunications firm, ZTE, accountable for repeated violations of U.S. export controls and sanctions laws. Read more about the bill [here](#).

“I am proud to reintroduce this bipartisan bill to hold the Chinese state-directed telecoms company, ZTE, accountable for repeated violations of U.S. exports controls and sanctions laws,” **Senator Rubio said.** “China’s communist government continues to threaten our national security interests through state-directed actors and, while it was a mistake to strike a ‘deal’ with ZTE in the first place, this bill would ensure ZTE is held accountable if and when it cheats again.”

Monday, I denounced the Senate Democrats attempts to block the Born-Alive Survivors Protection Act (S.130), of which I am a proud cosponsor. The importance to protect the lives of the unborn and of newborns is paramount. Read my statement [here](#).

“That Senate Democrats would block a bill to protect a baby who survives an abortion speaks volumes,” **said Rubio**. “Supporting a newborn’s right to life should not be a partisan issue.

Unfortunately, Senate Democrats, like their colleagues in Virginia and New York, seem to have no issue publicly supporting legal infanticide. It is clear that, on the issue of life, extremism has become mainstream in the Democratic Party.”

On Thursday, I introduced bipartisan legislation with Senator Maggie Hassan (D-NH) to strengthen counterterrorism coordination efforts at the Department of Homeland Security. Read more [here](#).

“The Counterterrorism Advisory Board (CTAB) plays a critical role in the Department of Homeland Security’s work to prevent terrorist attacks by identifying and reducing security threats and vulnerabilities,” **said Rubio**. “I am proud to join Senator Hassan in reintroducing this bipartisan bill to ensure that the CTAB facilitates a cohesive operational strategy so that DHS components and their partners are best enabled to detect, deter, and disrupt terrorist operations”

On Wednesday, I along with Senators Ron Wyden (D-OR) and Ed Markey (D-MA), introduced the Saudi Educational Transparency and Reform Act. This bipartisan legislation would require the State Department to report on religious intolerance in textbooks distributed by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Read more [here](#).

“If the Saudi Government wants to try and restore its credibility after the brutal murder of journalist Jamal Khashoggi, it must make meaningful reforms, including honoring its commitment to remove intolerant content from its textbooks,” **Rubio said**.

“Language that incites hatred and violence in educational materials provided to children is dangerous and contradicts American and Saudi counterterrorism efforts. This important bipartisan bill will ensure that the United States is monitoring and holding accountable the Saudi government to get rid of this alarming content once and for all.”

On Thursday, I met with Assistant Secretary of State for Western Hemisphere Affairs Kimberly Breier to discuss U.S. efforts to restore democracy and constitutional order in Venezuela through humanitarian aid and other assistance. Read more [here](#).



On Thursday, I met with the Foreign Minister of Brazil, Ernesto Faraujo, to talk about our strong bilateral relationship with Brazil and the country's commitment to regional stability in Latin America. Read more [here](#).



On Thursday, Senator John Cornyn (R-TX) and I signed a letter led by Senator Cory Gardner (R-CO) to House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, urging her to invite Taiwan's President Tsai Ing-Wen to address a joint session of Congress. Read more [here](#).

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

February 7, 2019

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House of Representatives
H-232, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Madam Speaker:

We write to respectfully urge you to invite Tsai Ing-Wen, the President of Taiwan, to address a joint session of Congress in the near future. This invitation would be consistent with U.S. law, enhance U.S. leadership in the Indo-Pacific region, and justly reward a true friend and ally of the United States and the American people.

As you know, April 10th will mark the 40th anniversary of the Taiwan Relations Act (TRA). The TRA forms the basis of the U.S. unofficial relationship with Taiwan. In particular, the TRA requires "to make clear that the United States decision to establish diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China rests upon the expectation that the future of Taiwan will be determined by peaceful means."

The People's Republic of China (PRC) has continued to escalate its rhetoric and actions that threaten Taiwan's democracy and sovereignty. Since the May 2016 inauguration of President Tsai, five nations have withdrawn diplomatic recognition from Taiwan, due to pressure from Beijing. In his New Year's message earlier this month, PRC President Xi Jinping would not rule out the use of force to "re-unify" mainland China and Taiwan.

Since the TRA went into effect, Congress has expressed near-unanimous bipartisan support for Taiwan, including encouraging high-level leader visits between Taiwan and the United States. Most recently, the Taiwan Travel Act (P.L. 115-135), signed into law on March 16, 2018, explicitly allows "high-level officials of Taiwan to enter the United States, under conditions which demonstrate appropriate respect for the dignity of such officials, and to meet with officials of the United States." The Asia Reassurance Initiative Act of 2018 (P.L. 115-409), signed into law on December 31, 2018, re-affirms the provisions of the Taiwan Travel Act.

While we understand that the honor of addressing a joint address to Congress is generally reserved for recognized heads of state, there is also clear precedent for inviting prominent democratic leaders. On November 15, 1989, Lech Walesa addressed a joint session of Congress as chairman of the Solidarity movement. On June 26, 1990, Nelson Mandela addressed a joint session of Congress as deputy president of the African National Congress.

On Thursday, I joined Senator Ron Wyden (D-OR) in a letter to the Department of Homeland Security requesting the agency conduct a threat assessment of the national security risks posed by foreign-made Virtual Private Networks (VPN) apps. Read more [here](#).

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

February 7, 2019

Christopher C. Krebs
Director
Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency
Department of Homeland Security
Washington, D.C. 20528

Dear Director Krebs:

We write concerning the growth of mobile applications that could expose U.S. government employees' web browsing data to third parties, heightening the risk of data interception. We are particularly concerned about the potential threat posed by foreign-made apps that are affiliated with countries of national security concern and urge you to examine the national security risk they pose.

In recent years, mobile data-saving and Virtual Private Network (VPN) apps have become popular, as consumers have grown increasingly interested in securing their internet connection and protecting their privacy. For example, mobile browsers like Dolphin, Yandex, and Opera use their own servers as an intermediary for user traffic, compressing web pages before delivering them to the user to provide data-saving functionality. Similarly, VPN providers route all user traffic through their own servers, nominally to mitigate privacy concerns.

Millions of consumers have downloaded these apps, some of which are made by foreign companies in countries that do not share American interests or values. Because these foreign apps transmit users' web-browsing data to servers located in or controlled by countries that have an interest in targeting U.S. government employees, their use raises the risk that user data will be surveilled by those foreign governments. The compromise of that data could harm U.S. national security.

The U.S. government has already recognized this threat. After investigating the national security risks posed by Chinese telecom equipment, the House Intelligence Committee recommended "the United States should view with suspicion the continued penetration of the U.S. telecommunications market by Chinese telecommunications companies." Similarly, the Department of Homeland Security last year directed all federal agencies to purge their systems of products created by Kaspersky Labs, citing the Russian government's legal ability to compel Kaspersky Labs to assist Russia's intelligence gathering operations. If U.S. intelligence experts believe Beijing and Moscow are leveraging Chinese and Russian-made technology to surveil Americans, surely DHS

In Case You Missed It...

"Marco Rubio: The Truth About B.D.S. and the Lies About My Bill" ([The New York Times](#), 2/5/2019)

"Sen. Marco Rubio Invites Venezuelan Opposition Leader's Appointee to State of the Union" ([Daily Beast](#), 2/4/2019)

"Nearly 50 U.S. lawmakers, led by Florida Senator Marco Rubio, wrote to Ross last week asking for quick action. Since 1996, when Washington first agreed to suspend anti-dumping cases, hundreds of U.S. tomato growers have been forced out of business, they said." (U.S. to end tomato trade pact with Mexico, threatening duties, [Reuters](#), 2/7/2019)

“Rubio: All options on the table for Venezuela” ([WFTV Orlando](#), 2/7/2019)

“Venezuela’s Opposition Leader Guaidó to Name New Citgo Board, Rubio Says” ([The Wall Street Journal](#), 2/6/2019)

“Marco Rubio Goes to Bat for More Choices, Relocation Options in HUD Voucher Program” ([Sunshine State News](#), 2/4/2019)

“Marco Rubio Pushes Back at the Anti-Israel BDS Movement” ([Florida Daily](#), 2/6/2019)

“‘That Senate Democrats would block a bill to protect a baby who survives an abortion speaks volumes,’ said Rubio.” ([Life News](#), 2/4/2019)

“El País, por su parte, destaca cómo más recientemente, la noche del 21 de enero, la Casa Blanca llamó al congresista Mario Díaz-Balart y al senador Marco Rubio para una reunión con Donald Trump, junto al vicepresidente Mike Pence y el equipo de seguridad, en relación con Venezuela.” (Tres cubanoamericanos claves en el posicionamiento de EEUU sobre Venezuela , [Diario Las Americas](#), 2/4/2019)

“No matter how hard Trump attacks Cuba and Venezuela in his address to the joint session of Congress, Trump is likely to get rare bipartisan support from Cuban-American lawmakers such as Republican Sen. Marco Rubio of Florida, who has pushed Trump to take a stronger stance on Cuba, and Sen. Bob Menendez, the ranking Democrat on the Foreign Relations Committee who accused Cuban leader Miguel Díaz-Canel along with Russia’s Vladimir Putin with keeping Maduro in power.” (Inside Trump’s ‘Cubanization’ of America’s Venezuela policy, [Miami Herald](#), 2/5/2019)

“Trump says he listens to Marco Rubio’s guidance on Venezuela” ([Miami Herald](#), 2/6/2019)

“Marco Rubio Continues to Swing Away at ZTE” ([Sunshine State News](#), 2/6/2019)

“U.S. Sen. Marco Rubio held a field hearing in Liberty City to talk about his support for small businesses and to speak about bills he has filed regarding Liberty City and Liberty Square.” (Hearings about small business in Liberty City, [The Miami Times](#), 2/6/2019)

“Marco Rubio: State Department Needs to Examine Saudi Education” ([Florida Daily](#), 2/6/2019)

“The senators, including Cory Gardner, Marco Rubio, Tom Cotton, John Cornyn and Ted Cruz, released their letter to Pelosi on Thursday, ahead of a March 1 deadline for

Washington and Beijing to reach a trade deal.” (Republican U.S. senators want Taiwan president to address Congress, [Reuters](#), 2/7/2019)

“Rubio indicó que EE UU envió 50 toneladas de insumos para ayuda humanitaria”
([El Nacional](#), 2/8/2019)

Legislation Introduced...

- I joined my colleagues in reintroducing bipartisan [legislation](#) to hold Chinese state-directed telecommunications firm, ZTE, accountable for repeated violation of U.S. export controls and sanctions laws.
- Senators Ron Wyden (D-OR), Ed Markey (D-MA) and I introduced the [Saudi Educational Transparency and Reform Act](#) to require State Department reports on religious intolerance in education materials in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.
- Senator Maggie Hassan (D-NH) and I reintroduced bipartisan [legislation](#) to strengthen counterterrorism coordination efforts at the Department of Homeland Security (DHS).

Coming up...

- My staff will host Mobile Office Hours next week to assist constituents with federal casework issues in their communities. More information and locations near you [here](#).

Keep up with me on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#)

