

DHS Crackdown on Forced Labor Goods From China

On September 14, 2020, CBP issued five Withhold Release Orders (WRO) on products from China which are mainly, but not exclusively, manufactured in China's Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (XUAR). The move targets companies that the DHS believes are engaging in human rights abuses against Uyghurs and other ethnic and religious minorities in China through forced labor.

In a September 14, 2020 CBP press release¹, Acting DHS Deputy Secretary Ken Cuccinelli said "By taking this action, DHS is combating illegal and inhumane forced labor, a type of modern slavery, used to make goods that the Chinese government then tries to import into the United States. When China attempts to import these goods into our supply chains, it also disadvantages American workers and businesses." Since September 14, 2020, CBP has issued two additional WROs against other Xinjiang based manufacturers. Effective January 13, 2021, CBP issued a WRO that will detain tomato products and cotton products produced in XUAR.²

Among the goods included in the September 14, 2020 WROs are: hair products made in the Lop County Hair Product Industrial Park, apparel made by Yili Zhuowan Garment Manufacturing Co. and Baoding LYSZD Trade and Business Co.; cotton produced and processed by Xinjiang Junggar Cotton and Linen Co.; as well as computer parts made by Hefei Bitland Information Technology Co. in Anhui, China - which, unlike the other four manufacturers, is not located in China's Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region. Notably, Hefei Bitland Information Technology makes high-performance graphics cards for laptop and manufactures LCM modules; their main clients include Lenovo, HP and Haier.³ According to an article in *The Intercept*, "Lenovo has imported an estimated 258,000 laptops from a Chinese manufacturer...Hefei Bitland, which participates in a program to provide factories with cheap labor from persecuted Uyghurs."⁴

1 CBP website, *DHS Cracks Down on Goods Produced by Chinese State-Sponsored Forced Labor*, September 14, 2020
https://www.cbp.gov/newsroom/national-media-release/dhs-cracks-down-goods-produced-china-s-state-sponsored-forced-labor?_ga=2.127750285.1438470425.1612987755-255658082.1612987755

2 CBP website, *CBP Issues Region-Wide Withhold Release Order on Products Made By Slave Labor*, January 13, 2021
https://www.cbp.gov/newsroom/national-media-release/cbp-issues-region-wide-withhold-release-order-products-made-slave?_ga=2.190842094.53488690.1613089051-255658082.1612987755

3 Forbes, Rapoza, Kenneth, *The 11 Sanctioned Chinese Companies*, July 22, 2020,
<https://www.forbes.com/sites/kenrapoza/2020/07/22/the-11-sanctioned-chinese-companies-what-they-sell-and-to-whom-they-sell-it/?sh=578d213f47eb>

4 The Intercept, Hvistendahl, M. and Fang, Lee. *Kids May Be Using Laptops From Forced Labor*, August 21, 2020
<https://theintercept.com/2020/08/21/school-laptops-lenovo-chromebooks-china-uyghur/>

Julian Newman, February 10, 2021