

To Whom It May Concern:

I, Edwin Wang, submits these comments to CBP to convey my objections to the proposal to ask Chinese citizens seeking to enter the United States under the EVUS program for their social media handles.

Specifically, this proposal seeks Chinese visitors to the US under the EVUS program to disclose "information associated with your online presence -- social media identifier". CBP is seeking comments, in part, on "whether the collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information shall have practical utility." We argue that it would not.

This proposal is unlikely to be effective at protecting homeland security and preventing terrorism. Unlike the 7 countries to which President Trump issued a travel ban under Executive Order 13769, China is not known internationally as a hotbed of terrorist activities and there is a negligible record of Chinese citizens committing terrorism in the United States. Furthermore, it is extremely unlikely that any person, terrorist or not, would post terrorism-related material publicly on social media before entering United States. Even if such posts are indeed published publicly, stringent online anti-terrorism censorship measures in China just passed in 2016 and the high level of state control of Internet in China would ensure that these posts be deleted in a matter of minutes, even seconds. Therefore, CBP is unlikely to detect any terrorism related material on the publicly available content of Chinese social media.

This proposal is likely to spur reciprocal measures from China, which would hurt the US-China relations that President Trump is eager to build. Unlike a similar previous measure applied to visitors under the ESTA program, who are citizens of mostly European nations and other US allies, **this proposal targets a single country, China** and is already being construed by Chinese state media and Chinese netizens as discriminatory against Chinese people, even white supremacist against Asians in general. Given the rising nationalistic sentiment in China that is often directed against United States, as seen in the recent United Airlines overbooking controversy in which the ethnicity of the Asian victim led to a boycott of United Airlines in China, this proposal, once passed, would likely result in a backlash in China, which could result in harsher reciprocal measures from China and hurt Americans travelling to China as well. Even if China does not impose such reciprocal measures, Chinese state media, controlled by the Communist Party, would almost certainly utilize this measure politically to discredit American human right standards, discredit American democratic institutions, and discredit the United States in general. Given the rising influence and popularity of state media among Chinese people, such measures are unlikely to contribute to a better image of the United States among the Chinese population and to a better US-China relationship at large.

This proposal is likely to hurt the US tourism industry and the US economy in general. Most Chinese tourists visiting the United States enter the United States with a B1/B2 visa which is covered by the EVUS system, and therefore will be asked to provide social media handles under this proposal. There are as many as 3 million tourists from China to US annually, contribution over \$30 billion to the US economy. As explained previously, the proposed measures are likely to make Chinese people unwilling to visit the United States. In fact, previous "extreme vetting" measures under Executive Order 13769 have already hit US tourist industry hard, as tourists from many countries, not just the 7 countries affected by Executive Order 13769, are showing a decreased willingness to travel to United States. Given the fact that China is bordered by many other world class travel destinations, and countries like Japan are currently aggressively welcoming foreign tourists, including Chinese tourists, by measures like tax breaks on items purchased in Japan, a drain of Chinese tourists and money from the US to other destinations is highly likely once this proposed measure is passed, which would further weaken the already embattled US tourism industry and hurt the US economy in general.

In summary, I respectfully commends that the CBP withdrawl the present proposal to instruct Chinese citizens seeking to enter the United States under the EVUS program to provide their social media handles.

Edwin Wang