

DANA ROHRBACHER
46th District, California

Committees:

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Chairman, Subcommittee on
Oversight and Investigations

Subcommittee on the
Middle East and South Asia

SCIENCE, SPACE, AND TECHNOLOGY

Subcommittee on
Space and Aeronautics

Subcommittee on
Energy and Environment



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

May 3, 2011

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President Ma Ying-jeou
Office of the President
Republic of China (Taiwan)

Dear Mr. President:

It has come to my attention that Chunghwa Telecom (CHT) has refused to renew its agreement to provide a satellite broadcast channel to New Tang Dynasty (NTD) of Taiwan. It has been said that the new satellite ST-2 that will be replacing the old ST-1 does not have enough bandwidth, so CHT is cutting NTD from its customer list. How was the decision made as to who would get bandwidth on the new satellite and who would not among CHT's customers?

I am concerned about the termination of CHT services to NTD. My U.S. House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations just held a hearing on the important role broadcasting plays in the promotion of democratic sentiments in mainland China. A witness from NTD appeared at the hearing. NTD relies on CHT for broadcast services in both Taiwan and China to spread news and information that the Beijing dictatorship does not want its subjugated people to hear. The democratic government of Taiwan should be encouraging the spread of ideas favoring freedom and traditional values across the Strait.

As a founder of the Taiwan Caucus in the U.S. House of Representatives, I have always felt that democracy and freedom are the bonds that tie our two nations together. If Taiwan does not support the struggle for freedom of thought within China, I see no need for America to support Taiwan.

As of February, 2011, the Ministry of Transportation and Communications was the largest shareholder of Chunghwa Telecom stock (35 percent). Five of nine Directors and two of three Supervisors are government officials. The Chairman and CEO is a former MOTC official. It is safe to refer to CHT as a state-controlled corporation. Thus, decisions made by CHT take on the character of Executive Yuan policy.

I would be interested to know if CHT's decision does reflect higher state policy. And can CHT's decision be reviewed and reversed by higher authority? Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dana Rohrabacher".

Dana Rohrabacher
Chairman
Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee
House Committee on Foreign Affairs