

China Accused of Infiltrating New York Government Through Top Cuomo, Hochul Aide

A mistrial declared this week in the case of a former top New York aide accused of acting as an agent for China has renewed concerns about foreign influence reaching deep into state-level government, not just Washington.

A Brooklyn federal judge declared a mistrial after jurors failed to reach a unanimous verdict in the case against Linda Sun, a former senior aide to Gov. Kathy Hochul and former Gov. Andrew Cuomo, who was accused of illegally advancing Beijing's interests while serving in New York's Executive Chamber.

One juror told the New York Post that the jury was nearly unanimous. "It was almost all guilty," the juror said, noting that all but two jurors were prepared to convict Sun and her husband, Chris Hu, on 18 of 19 corruption and fraud charges.

Prosecutors alleged Sun "brazenly" used her government position to influence policy and messaging favorable to China while receiving benefits that funded a lavish lifestyle. Evidence presented at trial included text messages in which Sun claimed extraordinary access to top state leaders. "She is much more obedient than the governor," Sun wrote in a 2021 text to Chinese consulate officials, according to prosecutors.



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In another exchange, Sun allegedly bragged, "The deputy governor listens to me more than the governor does," before offering to coach Hochul on preferred "talking points" for Chinese officials.

The trial also revealed efforts to shape New York's posture toward Taiwan, which China claims as its own. "I almost had a heart attack when we referred to Taiwan as a country," Sun wrote in an October 2020 text. "Thankfully, I had the press team correct it immediately."

Federal prosecutors further accused Sun of helping block meetings with Taiwanese officials, forging Hochul's signature on invitations for Chinese dignitaries, and steering millions of dollars in benefits toward her husband's business interests. The defense argued that Sun was a loyal public servant and dismissed claims that gifts, such as prepared meals, constituted bribes. "Linda Sun is a proud American and lifetime New Yorker," defense attorney Kenneth Abell told jurors. "But she did not commit any crimes."

The U.S. Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of New York said it plans to retry the case "as soon as possible," underscoring the seriousness of the allegations.

The near-conviction has drawn attention to what national security experts warn is a persistent vulnerability: state governments, which often lack the same counterintelligence safeguards as federal agencies, can be prime targets for foreign influence operations.

While the case has not yet resulted in a conviction, prosecutors argue it exposed how deeply a foreign government can allegedly embed itself inside state power structures. The mistrial, coming during Christmas week, leaves unresolved questions about how many similar efforts may go undetected beyond the halls of Congress.

A pretrial conference in the case is scheduled for Jan. 26, 2026.

Prepared by Charisma Media Staff.