

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

January 14, 2011

The Honorable Barack H. Obama
The President
The White House

Dear President Obama:

When you meet with Chinese President Hu Jintao during his upcoming visit to Washington on January 19 and 20, we urge that China's egregious human rights record be included as a key issue in your discussions. China touts its continued economic progress and integration into the world economy while refusing to acknowledge and uphold universal standards applicable to human rights. This was clearly manifest in the run-up to the recent Nobel Peace Prize ceremony, as China brazenly attempted to coerce other countries into boycotting the event while simultaneously launching an internal crackdown on Chinese human rights activists and family members of Nobel laureate Liu Xiaobo. As a fellow Nobel laureate, you acknowledged that the awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize to Mr. Liu "reminds us that political reform has not kept pace, and that the basic human rights of every man, woman and child must be respected." Among others, we hope that you will raise the following issues with President Hu:

- The need to release all prisoners of conscience in China including, but not limited to, Liu Xiaobo, Chen Guangcheng, and the sons of Uyghur leader and human rights activist Rebiya Kadeer, Alim and Ablikim Abdureyim.
 - o Liu Xiaobo's imprisonment on charges of "incitement to subvert state power and overthrow the socialist system" violates both the Chinese constitution and international law and represents an egregious example of use of state power to suppress individual rights to freedom of expression.
 - o A blind, self-taught lawyer from Shandong Province, Chen Guangcheng recently completed a four-year, three-month prison sentence but has since been held under continuing house arrest. The ongoing harassment of Chen by China's public security officials heightens our concerns over the flagrant disregard of basic human rights by the Chinese government.
 - o Alim and Ablikim Abdureyim, Ms. Kadeer's sons, are currently imprisoned in Xinjiang where their health has deteriorated after having been convicted of trumped up charges. Other family members of Ms. Kadeer, including her daughter, Rushangul, and her nine grandchildren continue to experience harassment and intimidation.
- The need to recognize and respect the rights to freedom of speech and association, including those related to use of the Internet. In addition to stopping its heavy-handed and obtrusive censorship of Internet content, China should immediately release the dozens of journalists and bloggers who have been detained and imprisoned for attempting to exercise their rights relating to freedom of speech.

- The need to implement and respect the rule of law, including developing a truly independent and impartial judiciary capable of conducting fair trials and protecting lawyers from state-sanctioned reprisals and punishment for representing individuals charged with human rights or religious freedom-related cases. In this regard, China should immediately release lawyer Gao Zhisheng and cease harassing Mr. Gao and other human rights lawyers.
- The need to recognize and respect religious freedom, including the religious rights of Tibetans, Uyghurs, and other ethnic minorities, and the need to refrain from harassing other distinct religious and spiritual communities including Christian “house” churches and members of Falun Gong.
- The need to immediately end the sale of arms to the Sudanese regime in Khartoum. According to several reports issued by the U.N. Panel of Experts on Sudan, China has continued to play a destructive role in Sudan by providing the Bashir government with arms which have been used to perpetrate the genocide in Darfur. Additionally, China should be urged to use its influence as an important economic partner of Khartoum to promote peace and stability in the country following the ongoing referendum.
- The need for China to honor its commitments as a signatory of the 1951 UN Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and the 1967 Protocol by ending its policy of repatriating North Korean refugees.

In your statement regarding the awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize, you wrote that “America will always be a voice for those aspirations that are universal to all human beings.” As members of Congress, we encourage you to give “voice” to those aspirations when you meet with President Hu. As past experience—even within your own administration—demonstrates, when that “voice” is stilled or silenced, the Chinese perceive that silence as a sign of timidity and weakness. Accordingly, we urge you to speak with a strong and clear voice in representing the American people in holding China accountable for its troubled human rights record and demanding improvement.

Sincerely,

Frank R. Wolf
Member of Congress

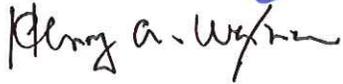
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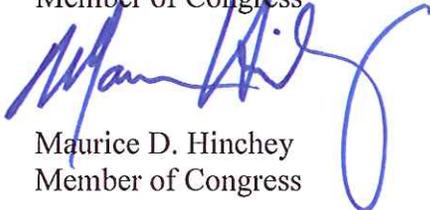
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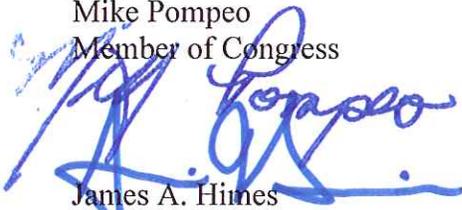


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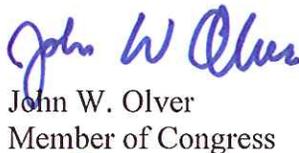
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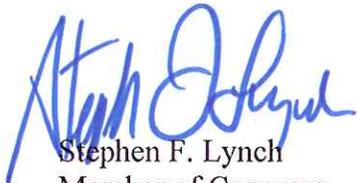
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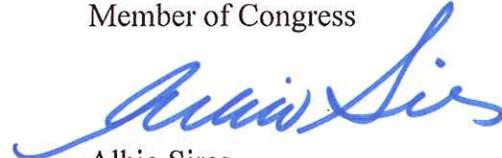
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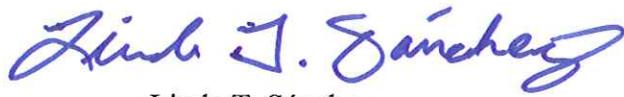
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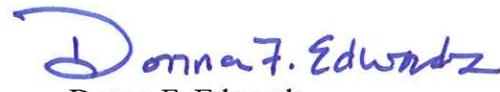
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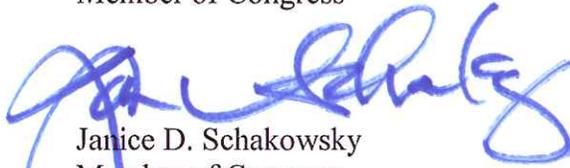
Albio Sires
Member of Congress



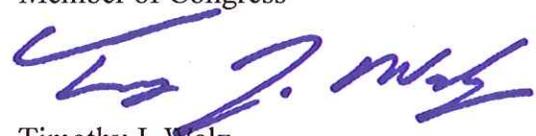
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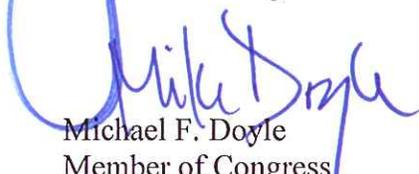
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