

URGING THE GOVERNMENT OF CHINA TO REINSTATE ALL LICENSES OF GAO ZHISHENG AND HIS LAW FIRM AND REVISE LAW AND PRACTICE IN CHINA SO IT CONFORMS TO INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 365) urging the Government of China to reinstate all licenses of Gao Zhisheng and his law firm, remove all legal and political obstacles for lawyers attempting to defend criminal cases in China, including politically sensitive cases, and revise law and practice in China so that it conforms to international standards.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. CON. RES. 365

Whereas, since November 2005, the Beijing Judicial Bureau has shut down the law firm and suspended the license of Mr. Gao Zhisheng, one of China's best known lawyers and legal rights defenders;

Whereas Mr. Gao has represented citizens of China in lawsuits against various local and administrative governmental bodies of the People's Republic of China over corruption, land seizures, police abuse, and violations of religious freedom;

Whereas Mr. Gao wrote 3 open letters to President Hu Jintao and Premier Wen Jiabao condemning the methods employed by the Government of China in implementing its ban on "evil cults", such as the Falun Gong and an additional letter documenting severe persecution of Christians in Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region;

Whereas Mr. Gao's law practice filed a petition to appeal the verdict against Cai Zhuohua, who was found guilty of "illegal business practices" based upon his distribution of Bibles and religious material;

Whereas Mr. Gao's home has been constantly monitored by agents from the Ministry of State Security and Mr. Gao was prevented by the Public Security Ministry from meeting with the representatives of the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Torture during his November 2005 visit to Beijing;

Whereas agents of the Public Security Bureau of China, numbering between 10 and 20, have consistently monitored the activities and whereabouts of Mr. Gao, his wife, and his daughter since late November 2005;

Whereas, on November 10, 2005, an open letter, signed by 138 organizations worldwide, was submitted to President Bush calling on him to voice support of Mr. Gao and his legal practice during the President's November 2005 visit to China;

Whereas other human rights lawyers, collectively known as "rights defenders", or Wei Quan, have also faced harassment, arrest, and detention for their consistent and vigorous activities to defend the fundamental rights of the people of China, contrary to measures within the law of China protecting human rights and rights of lawyers;

Whereas Mr. Chen Guangcheng, a blind human rights lawyer who has exposed cases of violence against women, including forced abortion and forced sterilization perpetrated by authorities of China under the 1-child policy, was beaten on October 10, 2005, and currently remains under house arrest;

Whereas law professor and People's Political Consultative Congress Delegate, Xu Zhiyong, who advocates on behalf of petitioners filing grievances with the Central

government in Beijing, was also beaten on October 10, 2005, when meeting with Chen Guangcheng;

Whereas Mr. Yang Maodong (also known as Guo Feixiong), a lawyer representing villagers in Taishi village who attempted to oust their village head in peaceful elections, has been arbitrarily detained repeatedly and remains under consistent surveillance by security agents;

Whereas Mr. Tang Jingling, a Guangdong based lawyer also working on the Taishi village elections case, has been fired from his law firm and was beaten on February 2, 2006, after attempting to meet with Yang Maodong;

Whereas, on February 28, 2006, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV and AIDS (also known as "UNAIDS") office in China expressed concern regarding the disappearance of Mr. Hu Jia, an activist who worked to organize the legal defense of AIDS patients in Henan Province, and who has been placed in detention and has not been permitted to contact his friends and family since February 16, 2006;

Whereas, according to the Department of State 2005 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices, lawyers who aggressively tried to defend their clients continued to face serious intimidation and abuse by police and prosecutors, and some of these lawyers were detained;

Whereas the Constitution of China states that the courts shall, in accordance with the law, exercise judicial power independently, without interference from administrative organs, social organizations, and individuals, but in practice, the judiciary is not independent and it receives policy guidance from both the Government of China and the Communist Party, whose leaders use a variety of means to direct courts on verdicts and sentences, particularly in politically sensitive cases;

Whereas the Criminal Procedure Law of China gives suspects the right to seek legal counsel, but defendants in politically sensitive cases frequently find it difficult to find an attorney;

Whereas the Lawyers Law of the People's Republic of China states that a lawyer may "accept engagement by a criminal suspect in a criminal case to provide him with legal advice and represent him in filing a petition or charge or obtaining a guarantor pending trial";

Whereas according to Article 306 of the Criminal Law of China, defense attorneys can be held responsible if their clients commit perjury, and prosecutors and judges in such cases have wide discretion in determining what constitutes perjury;

Whereas according to the All-China Lawyers Association, since 1997 more than 500 defense attorneys have been detained on similar charges, and such cases continued during the last year despite promises made by the Government of China to amend Article 306;

Whereas the State Department's 2005 Annual Report on Human Rights states that China's human rights record "remained poor", that authorities of China quickly moved to suppress those who openly expressed dissenting political views, and that writers, religious activists, dissidents, lawyers, and petitioners to the Central Government were particularly targeted;

Whereas directly following their August 2005 visit to China, the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom found that—

(1) the Government of China actively seeks to control and suppress the activities of unregistered religious organizations;

(2) China has outlawed unregistered religious organizations and provides severe pen-

alties for engaging in unregistered religious activities;

(3) leaders of unregistered Protestant organizations have come under increased pressure to register their churches and affiliate with one of the government approved organizations, and those who refuse, for theological or other reasons, are subject to harassment, detention, arrest, and closing of their religious facilities;

(4) groups determined by the Government of China to be "evil cults", such as Falun Gong, are brutally suppressed; and

(5) practitioners of Falun Gong have experienced severe persecution, including arrests, numerous detentions, torture, irregular trials, imprisonment, and subjection to the reeducation through labor system, whereby accused criminals are subject to up to 3 years detention;

Whereas despite questions raised by the Government of the United States and others about the charges made against Pastor Cai Zhuohua, the Government of China sentenced Pastor Cai and other members of his family to 3 years in prison for "illegal business practices" for their printing and distribution of religious materials;

Whereas, according to China's Regulations on Religious Affairs, promulgated in March 2005, any religious organization that carries out activities without registering with the government is subject to civil punishment and to criminal prosecution;

Whereas since the promulgation of the Regulations on Religious Affairs, the Government of China has stepped up its efforts to eliminate unregistered religious activity, with raids on "house church" Christian groups in several provinces, resulting in detention of hundreds of leaders of the house church, dozens of whom remain in custody; and

Whereas the Government of China has, on several occasions, stated a commitment to ratify the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, but has delayed ratification since signing the document in 1998: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That—

(1) Congress—

(A) commends "rights defense" lawyers and activists of China for their courage and integrity, and expresses moral support for this grass-roots "rights defense" movement in China;

(B) urges the Government of the People's Republic of China, at all levels, to cease its harassment of Mr. Gao Zhisheng, overturn the suspension of his license to practice law, and restore his legal right to represent the clients of his choosing as protected by China's own Constitution, its Criminal Procedure Law, and its Lawyers Law;

(C) urges the Government of the People's Republic of China to repeal Article 306 of the Criminal Code of China, which provides penalties for lawyers whose clients are accused of perjury and has been used to curtail the active legal defense of individuals accused of political crimes;

(D) urges the Government of the People's Republic of China to undertake measures to further amend the Lawyers Law to ensure lawyers' rights to investigate charges brought against their clients, to provide a vigorous defense of their clients, and to remain free of harassment and intimidation throughout the course of representing clients, including clients who are charged with offenses related to political or religious activities;

(E) urges the Government of the People's Republic of China to respect fully the universality of the right to freedom of religion or belief and other human rights;

(F) urges the Government of the People's Republic of China to ratify and implement in law the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and to adopt such legislative or other measures as may be necessary to give effect to the rights recognized in the Covenant;

(G) urges the Government of the People's Republic of China to amend or repeal Article 300 of the Criminal Code of China so it is consistent with international law, and to halt its crackdown on spiritual movements;

(H) urges the Government of the People's Republic of China to halt arrests, harassment, and intimidation of leaders of unregistered religious organizations on the basis that their organizations violated the law by not registering with the Government of China;

(I) urges the Government of the People's Republic of China to Amend the Regulations on Religious Affairs to conform more closely with the internationally recognized freedom of thought, conscience, religion or belief and allow all religious believers in China to practice their religion without interference from the government or from government sponsored "patriotic religious associations";

(J) urges the Government of the People's Republic of China to release Pastor Cai Zhuohua, his wife, and others imprisoned with him, and to allow Pastor Cai to resume religious activities and to resume leadership of his congregation in Beijing; and

(K) urges the Government of the People's Republic of China to invite the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on freedom of religion or belief to China as promised according to an agreement between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of China and the Department of State of China in March 2005; and

(2) it is the sense of Congress that—

(A) the Government of the United States should support democracy and human rights programs that strengthen protection of basic rights and freedoms, and should initiate programs to train lawyers, judges, academics, and students in China about international human rights law, to inform citizens of China about international human rights norms, and to build organizations and associations to promote these priorities;

(B) the Government of the United States should seek grant proposals and fund programs to promote legal protections and cultural awareness of the right to the freedom of religion or belief commensurate to ongoing rule of law programs funded by the Human Rights and Democracy Fund for Chinese workers, women, and public interest law training; and

(C) the President should raise the issue of the Government of China's harassment, arrest, detention, and persecution of rights defense lawyers and activists and the need for the Government of China to respect the basic human rights of its citizens and the rule of law during his planned meeting with Chinese President Hu Jintao in April 2006.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) and the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the concurrent resolution under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New Jersey?

There was no objection.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I thank our good friend, Mr. MARK KENNEDY, for sponsoring this important human rights legislation. It is very well crafted. It sends a clear and unambiguous message to the People's Republic of China. Having worked the China issue for 26 years as a Member of Congress, I want to thank him for his extraordinary leadership on this. It is an excellent resolution.

This resolution can probably be summed up in one phrase: Rule of law. When you get past the details, it asks China simply to adhere to the rule of law. First, it demands that China adhere to its own Constitution, its own procedure law, and its own law on lawyers. This is not asking a great deal. These instruments give very few rights, it is true, but unless China protects the rights it already acknowledges, nobody in China can have any genuine fundamental human rights.

China acknowledges the right of defendants to a lawyer, the right of a citizen to seek redress of their legitimate grievances through the courts, and the duty of lawyers to represent clients. Yet China tramples on even these minimal rights.

Lawyers like Gao Zhisheng, who dare to follow the law and represent clients, are harassed, threatened, beaten, forbidden to practice, detained and imprisoned. Defense lawyers are faced with the constant threat of indictment for perjury if and when the government decides their clients have lied. These practices must stop.

Secondly, the resolution demands that China cease its assault on basic human rights, an assault that is the real reason behind the persecution of Gao Zhisheng and other Chinese lawyers.

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They are being punished for their courageous defense of religious freedom, the right of women not to be violated by China's coercive population control program, the right of citizens to protest corrupt officials, the rights of citizens to petition their government to redress grievances. Such rights are not Western or American inventions. They are universal. No rule of law can exist unless such rights are acknowledged and protected.

Last week, Madam Speaker, on the eve of President Bush's meeting with Chinese President Hu Jintao, I held a hearing to examine China's human rights abuses, and it was my 26th hearing on human rights abuses in the People's Republic of China. Our witnesses included three individuals—survivors—who have spent considerable time in Chinese concentration camps—Laogai—including Harry Wu, who

spent 19 years in prison. The hearing focused on some of the worst abuses, including Chinese censorship of the Internet, the use of the Internet as a tool of repression, violations of the rights of Chinese citizens to worship freely; also the trampling of labor rights, and coercive family planning, which continue to be a serious and highly pervasive abuse by the Chinese Government.

Madam Speaker, Beijing has increasingly viewed the information available on the Internet as a potential threat to the party's ability to control the population and monopolize political power. It has turned China into one of the most repressive and restrictive Internet countries in the world. It is important to note that freedoms that we enjoy in America allowing individuals to publish information and news on the Web unfiltered is not something that Chinese individuals have. Those freedoms do not exist in China. Individuals who attempt to speak freely are imprisoned and tortured.

At the very least, U.S. corporations should not be aiding in that process. Yet at a February hearing I chaired on the Internet in China, we learned in greater and disturbing detail how some of the biggest corporations of America have partnered with the much-hated Chinese secret police to find, apprehend, convict and jail religious believers, labor activists, and prodemocracy advocates.

Yahoo told us at the hearing how they profoundly regretted sending Shi Tao to prison for 10 years, but then they couldn't tell us and didn't seem to want to know how many others were condemned to jail and torture because of Yahoo's complicity with the secret police. When I asked under what conditions, a court order, police demand, a fishing trip, Yahoo surrenders e-mails and address files, Yahoo told us that they couldn't reveal this information because it would break Chinese law. Give me a break.

Google, for its part, created an exclusive Chinese search engine that only a Joseph Goebbels could love. Type in any number of vile words like "human rights" or "Tiananmen Square massacre" or "Falun Gong," and you get rerouted to government propaganda, much of it heavily anti-American, much of it heavy anti-President Bush, and filled with hate, especially for the Falun Gong.

How did Google respond to our deep concern about their enabling of a dictatorship to expand its hate message? They hired big-time Washington lobbying firms like Podesta-Mattoon and the DCI Group to put a good face on it all, and presumably kill my pending legislation, the Global Online Freedom Act of 2006.

Amazingly, Cisco showed no seller's remorse whatsoever that its technology, especially Policenet, a tool for good in the hands of honest cops and legitimate law enforcement, but a tool of repression in the hands of Chinese

police, has now effectively linked and exponentially expanded the capabilities of the Chinese secret police.

Microsoft also censors and shuts down blogs that Big Brother objects to. You can be sure that no serious discussion of human rights was on the agenda at President Hu's visit with Bill Gates at Microsoft.

China's continued repression of religion is among the most despotic in the world. In February, a BBC report said that China had warned Hong Kong's newly appointed Cardinal, Joseph Zen, a well-known critic of China's suppression of religious freedoms, to remain quiet on political issues. Citizens practicing a faith other than officially sanctioned religions are often subjected to torture, imprisonment and death, at which time prisoner organs are frequently harvested to meet demand. Christians, Tibetan Buddhists, and Muslim Uighurs are all being persecuted for their faith. Today numerous underground Roman Catholic priests and bishops and Protestant pastors languish in the infamous concentration camps known as the Laogai for simply proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

In the early 1990s, Madam Speaker, I met a bishop, Bishop Su Zhimin of Baoding Province, a gentle and kind man who celebrated mass for our small delegation. I was deeply inspired by his faith. He had recently been let out of jail, and his compassion was overwhelming even for those who jailed and mistreated him. He had no animosity for his jailers, only compassion and forgiveness. Soon after my visit—he was sent back to prison. What kind of regime incarcerates a truly noble man like this? Bishop Su has now spent 30 years of his life in prison for loving God and for loving his neighbor and even loving the despotic dictatorship that so hates him. What kind of barbaric regime hurts a man like this?

And then there is the special hate that Beijing pours out on the Falun Gong. Nearly 7 years ago the Chinese Government began its brutal campaign to completely eradicate the Falun Gong through whatever means necessary. Many party members as early as 7 years ago or so and army officials began to practice Falun Gong. Like all dictators and totalitarian terror systems, the PRC fears and hates what it cannot control, so it decided to destroy and intimidate those who practice Falun Gong. We see before us now a Stalinist nightmare revived for the 21st century, hundreds, perhaps thousands, dead as a result of torture; tens of thousands of jailed individuals without trial held in labor camps, prisons and mental hospitals where they are forced to endure torture-brainwashing sessions.

I would note parenthetically that when a woman protested on the White House lawn when President Hu was making his speech, it may have been impolite for her to do that, but had she done that in China, Madam Speaker,

she would be dead now, having been subjected to torture and then an execution. That is the reality on the ground in the People's Republic of China.

Just over a year ago, Madam Speaker, Beijing finally released the renowned Uighur human rights activist Rebiya Kadeer, who also testified at our hearing from prison, where she had been held on trumped-up charges and lived there in prison for over 6 years. We had hoped this signaled some sort of genuine improvement. Maybe things were beginning to turn. However, we have now learned that nothing could be further from the truth, and the Muslims, like the Tibetan Buddhists and like so many others, are being continually harassed and put into prison.

Madam Speaker, coercive family planning in China has slaughtered more innocent children than any war in human history. It is a weapon of mass destruction. Coercive family planning has wounded Chinese women by the millions. And one psychological consequence is that some 500 women commit suicide each and every day in the People's Republic of China. China's one child per couple policy decreed back in 1979 has killed hundreds of millions of babies by imposing Draconian fines up to 10 times annual salaries for both husband and wife on their parents who are told they must abort their child. Brothers and sisters in China, Madam Speaker, are illegal.

Sex selection abortions, a direct consequence of the one child per couple policy, has led to gendercide. Approximately 100 million girls are missing in China, killed by sex selection abortion. One Chinese demographer has admitted that by the year 2020, 40 million Chinese men will not be able to find wives because Beijing's weapon of mass destruction, population control, destroyed the girls.

Then there is the whole issue of labor rights. We heard from the policy director of the AFL-CIO who raised significant and profound issues of labor rights violations by the Government of China, Ms. Thea Lee, who spoke at our hearing. We all know that solidarity in Poland made the difference in ushering in respect for human rights in Central and Eastern Europe and then Russia, and that in China there are no labor rights, and there is no recourse for hundreds of millions of Chinese laborers trapped in these poor working conditions. Ms. Lee pointed out that those who protest unjust wage and labor practices are often put into prison. They, like religious and prodemocracy advocates, are tortured and cruelly mistreated by the Government of China.

So let me just say, Madam Speaker, this resolution puts us on record as a Congress in a bipartisan way; Mr. LANTOS, who has been just outstanding and a champion on behalf of the human rights in China, MARK KENNEDY and FRANK WOLF and so many others who daily speak out against these abuses. This resolution gives us all an oppor-

tunity to speak truth to a despotic power that is literally getting away with murder that they must stop these egregious violations of human rights, and they must stop now.

I reserve the balance of my time. Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I might consume. I rise in strong support of this resolution.

Madam Speaker, before dealing with this resolution, I would like to commend my friend from New Jersey Chairman SMITH for holding an extraordinary hearing during the visit of the Chinese President Hu Jintao here in Washington. I had the privilege of watching that hearing from California, and I want to commend my friend for injecting a sorely needed dose of realism into this very ceremonial and in many ways misleading visit. You did the country great service, Mr. SMITH.

I would like to acknowledge the efforts of the leading Democratic cosponsor of this important measure, Representative DENNIS CARDOZA, my fellow Californian, and an emerging leader on human rights issues on the International Relations Committee.

Madam Speaker, during his groundbreaking trip to South Africa in 1966, the late Robert Kennedy addressed students at the University of Cape Town. His remarks that day were particularly eloquent, and I quote, "Few men are willing to brave the disapproval of their fellows, the censure of their colleagues, the wrath of their society. Moral courage is a rarer commodity than bravery in battle or great intelligence. Yet it is the one essential vital quality for those who seek to change the world which yields most painfully to change."

Madam Speaker, Chinese human rights lawyer Gao Zhisheng is precisely the type of individual Robert Kennedy had in mind 40 years ago in Cape Town. As a former soldier in the People's Liberation Army and a member of the Chinese Communist Party, Gao was set to join China's political and social elite. But, instead of power and prestige, Gao opted to become a human rights lawyer in a nation where respect for human rights and political freedoms are not part of the government's lexicon.

Gao's struggle for human rights within China's legal system has not been without cost. His law firm has been shut down by the Chinese Government. Gao and his family are subject to constant surveillance by an army of government agents. Police officers called him a few months ago to say, we have gathered a lot of information about you, including your home, your wife and your children. We even know which bus your children usually take to go to school.

Madam Speaker, these scare tactics are unfortunately standard practice against Chinese lawyers who fight for real justice in the Chinese legal system. Gao provoked Beijing's wrath by defending a Chinese activist who had worked on behalf of the villagers trying to unseat their corrupt village

chief, and by representing a journalist sentenced to jail for posting his own political thoughts on line. And perhaps, most importantly, Gao had written an open letter to the Chinese leadership condemning the unfounded persecution of the Falun Gong.

The resolution before the House today commends Gao and other Chinese human rights lawyers for their brave and principled actions on behalf of individual Chinese citizens fighting the government's injustice. It also condemns the Chinese Government's ceaseless efforts to harass, intimidate and imprison lawyers who are simply attempting to uphold China's own Constitution.

Madam Speaker, when Bob Kennedy spoke to South African students four decades ago, it seemed inconceivable that apartheid would fall and that human rights and democracy would one day flourish in South Africa.

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The skeptics were wrong. Today it seems similarly probable that China will one day have a democratically elected government that respects human rights. But Gao and his fellow human rights lawyers have bravely refused to concede defeat, and we remain grateful to their moral courage and willingness to persevere despite all the odds. When the day comes that human rights are respected in China, we will all stand to applaud Gao and his colleagues.

Madam Speaker, I strongly support this resolution.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the distinguished gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. KENNEDY), the author of this resolution.

Mr. KENNEDY of Minnesota. Madam Speaker, I thank the chairman for yielding.

Madam Speaker, I rise today to call attention to the persecution that has been well laid out to those who dare challenge the Chinese Government on matters of human rights and religious freedom. This resolution calls on the Government of China to stop its persecution of lawyers who defend clients in human rights and religious freedom cases and to repeal its laws designed to prohibit unlicensed religions from meeting freely.

The case of Gao Zhisheng, one of China's best-known lawyers and human rights defenders, is illustrative of the abuse that the Chinese people suffer for the exercise of rights that many Americans take for granted.

Mr. Gao has dared to represent Chinese citizens in lawsuits over corruption, land seizures, police abuse, and violations of religious freedom. One of these lawsuits was filed to appeal a verdict against Cai Zhuohua, who was found guilty of illegal business practices because he dared to distribute Bibles. Because of his human rights de-

fense work, Mr. Gao had his law practice closed and virtually everyone he knew and his family followed by state agents.

Madam Speaker, just as troubling is the case of Chen Guangcheng, a human rights lawyer who is blind and who exposed cases of violence against women, including forced abortion and forced sterilization under China's one-child policy. For his advocacy, last October Mr. Chen was beaten by state agents, placed under house arrest, and this past March taken into police custody. His whereabouts are presently unknown.

These are not isolated cases, according to the Department of State 2005 Country Report on Human Rights Practices in China. That report detailed the serious intimidation and abuse that continues to occur in China for those who defend basic human rights and religious freedom. In fact, with the promulgation of the Regulations on Religious Affairs, the Chinese Government has stepped up its efforts to eliminate unregistered religious activity with raids on house church Christian groups and the detention of hundreds of house church leaders, dozens of whom remain in custody.

Last November I stood with Chairman CHRIS SMITH, Ranking Member LANTOS, and Minority Leader NANCY PELOSI and listened as the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom report the active efforts to suppress religion it found in China. The commission's report detailed systematic activity against religious freedom, including the criminalization of unregistered religious organizations and severe penalties for those who engage in unregistered religious activities. Those who defy these rules are subject to harassment, detention, arrest, and closing of their religious facilities. Some, like the members of Falun Gong, face brutal oppression for their beliefs and horrific acts of torture that shock the conscience.

Madam Speaker, when I traveled to China last year, I spoke with government officials, including representatives of the Chinese Catholic Patriotic Association, to address these subjects. I spoke of the need for the U.S. and China to have an open dialogue about the importance of respecting these values. As I said then, fundamental human rights such as religious freedom should face no ideological, political, or geographic boundaries. These are rights given to man by the Almighty. They are part of who we are as human beings and are bigger than any government.

Madam Speaker, I urge the Chinese Government to release Chen Guangcheng and to cease persecution of Gao Zhisheng and reinstate his license. If China wants the respect of the world, it needs to respect its own people. I ask my colleagues to support this resolution. Let us make a statement that the Chinese Government and the Chinese rights defenders will hear.

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, this body stands united in calling on the Chinese Government to release this courageous fighter for human rights, and we urge all Members to vote for this resolution.

I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, I want to thank Mr. KENNEDY for his eloquent statement as well as TOM LANTOS for his always eloquent statements on behalf of human rights.

Madam Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. MILLER of Michigan). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 365.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds of those present have voted in the affirmative.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

IRAN FREEDOM SUPPORT ACT

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 282) to hold the current regime in Iran accountable for its threatening behavior and to support a transition to democracy in Iran, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 282

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Iran Freedom Support Act".

SEC. 2. TABLE OF CONTENTS.

The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title

Sec. 2. Table of contents

TITLE I—CODIFICATION OF SANCTIONS AGAINST IRAN

Sec. 101. Codification of sanctions

Sec. 102. Liability of parent companies for violations of sanctions by foreign entities

TITLE II—AMENDMENTS TO THE IRAN AND LIBYA SANCTIONS ACT OF 1996 AND OTHER PROVISIONS RELATED TO INVESTMENT IN IRAN

Sec. 201. Multilateral regime

Sec. 202. Imposition of sanctions

Sec. 203. Termination of sanctions

Sec. 204. Sunset

Sec. 205. Clarification and expansion of definitions

Sec. 206. United States pension plans

Sec. 207. Technical and conforming amendments