

on a large scale. China's brutal system of forced labor camps is thriving and remains a tool for repression and economic profit. Religious freedom is nonexistent without government approval, and independent trade unions are forbidden. The government refuses to reveal how many prisoners are executed each year, and organs are harvested from prisoners for money. Women and their families are being persecuted for violating the national one-child policy, and are subject to forced abortions and sterilization, detention and other punishments. Internet access is censored and cyber-dissidents are frequently monitored and arrested with the help of American companies. The number of political prisoners is on the rise as the Chinese people speak out against freedom of speech, press, and religion, the one-child policy, labor conditions, and property rights.

The truth is that a more democratic and free China that respects human rights and the rule of law would lead to a more stable region, and ultimately would be better for US interests and national security.

THE LAOGAI SYSTEM

The Laogai is a vast system of prison camps in the PRC consisting of a network of more than 1,045 prisons, labor camps, and mental institutions. The fundamental role of the Laogai is the same as it was during Chairman Mao Zedong's reign—reform through labor. Labor camps are used as a mechanism to suppress political dissent, human rights activists, religious and spiritual believers, ethnic minorities, and common law offenders. The UN Special Rapporteur on Torture has confirmed that prisoners are frequently tortured to extract false confessions to be used to convict in court.

Although some judicial reforms have been made, China's legal system is still rule by law not rule of law. The administrative detention system that the rest of the world has deemed a violation of international law, is still used. Laojiao (re-education through labor) allows individuals to be held for up to 3 years without legal proceedings. Anyone who speaks out against the Chinese Communist Party is falsely arrested and charged with the vague crimes of "endangering state security" or 'revealing state secrets', and 99 percent of those who are charged with these crimes are convicted.

The Laogai is an integral sector of the PRC's export economy and its forced labor products are frequently sold in U.S., European and world markets. Despite the 1992 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) safeguarding against the export of prison labor goods between the U.S. and China, little has been done to enforce this policy. U.S. customs stated that it could not conduct independent investigations in China because the Chinese government refuses to comply. Yet the U.S. has done nothing to encourage compliance. American businesses often claim to be unaware that their subcontractors are using prison labor, but this should no longer be an excuse.

RELIGION

The PRC does not permit religious freedom. Roman Catholicism is still outlawed and the Chinese government continues to defy the Vatican by ordaining church officials without its permission. In late November 2006 the Chinese Patriotic Catholic Association ordained Bishop Wang in Jiangsu province, the third incident of this kind in a year. The government controls all religious activities and any new groups must apply for permission to practice and to publish literature. The spiritual practice of Falun gong is banned as a cult. Falun Gong followers and underground "house church" Christians are persecuted daily. They are put under house arrest, detained without public trial, and imprisoned and tortured for their beliefs

under the auspices of various government campaigns. The Uyghur Muslim minority in Xinjiang province has been targeted and arrested according to an "anti-terrorism" campaign, while Tibetans monks and nuns have been forced to sign declarations denouncing the Dalai Lama as a dangerous separatist or face arrest according to a "patriotic education" campaign.

TRADE UNIONS

The PRC outlaws all independent trade unions, forcing its workers to join the state-sponsored All China Federation Trade Union (ACFTU), which by international standards is useless and only serves the Communist Party's needs. Most recently Walmart, a company that has opened 62 stores in China, capitulated to ACFTU demands and agreed to let the union set up branches in its stores. This fact is alarming because Walmart does not allow its employees to unionize in any other country. This is a vivid example that disproves the common theory that economic development is a catalyst for democratization in China. In contrast, the more companies that cooperate with the Communist Party's demands, such as Walmart, Cisco, Google, and Yahoo, the more the totalitarian regime is strengthened.

DEATH PENALTY AND ORGAN HARVESTING

China executes anywhere from 3,500–10,000 people per year, more than the combined total of all the countries in the entire world. The true number is impossible to ascertain because this information is not made public, making it difficult for NGOs such as Amnesty International to keep records.

After decades of organ harvesting, the PRC's Vice Minister of Health, Mr. Huang Jiefu, in November 2005 officially admitted that organs are taken from executed prisoners, but still insists that the prisoner or his family always gives informed consent. However, this usually never occurs. Families are often not notified when their relative will be executed and afterwards they are given the cremated remains to cover up any signs of organ removal, or are not given the body at all. Whether or not consent is actually given by the prisoner is irrelevant because even if death row prisoners give permission they are coerced and threatened by prison officials to comply. Although government legislation to regulate organ trade went into force in July 2006 prisoners' organs are still sold to wealthy Chinese nationals and foreigners with the profits going directly to the Chinese government. Multi-lingual websites boast about the ease of receiving an organ transplant in China.

POPULATION CONTROL

The PRC government continues to implement the inhumane one-child policy that began in 1976. No other country has such a draconian family planning policy that is offensive to all religions and all cultural backgrounds, and affects all of China's 1.3 billion members. Despite other social reforms, China's population policy still does not conform to international human rights standards. With few exceptions, only married couples that obtain pre-approval, i.e. a birth permit, may legally have a child even if it is their first child. A majority of Chinese women are required to use intrauterine devices (IUDs), and in villages women's menstrual cycles are monitored. Violators, if discovered to be pregnant, are coerced into having an abortion and to undergo sterilization. Occasionally the men are sterilized as well. Doctors who do not perform IUD insertion or sterilization, or who fake these operations, are jailed. Family members of violators are often imprisoned if they do not reveal their relative's whereabouts. Despite relaxation of certain aspects of China's family planning regulations, enforcement of the one-child policy continues to be coercive.

INTERNET CENSORSHIP

The crackdown of Internet dissidents remains widespread. American software companies such as Cisco, Microsoft, Google, and Yahoo continue to cooperate with the Chinese government to censor Internet use. These companies have agreed to restrict access to certain websites and terms, and to reveal the identities of users. As a result of these policies, according to Amnesty International at least 57 people have been arrested for discussing democracy on the Internet. Journalist Shi Tao was sentenced to 10 years in prison for writing an e-mail on Yahoo to a China pro-democracy group in the U.S. Cisco in particular has funded over us \$700 million telecom ventures in China including selling software to the Chinese police who use it to arrest dissenters.

Directly after the Tiananmen Square massacre in 1989, the US government banned the export of crime control and detection products to China, such as guns and handcuffs. However these sanctions are out of date. Today these restrictions must be expanded to include software and technology products that are used to censor the Internet.

DISSIDENTS AND POLITICAL PRISONERS

Human rights activists in China are frequently imprisoned for various reasons. Some recent examples include Sun Xiaodi, who has petitioned authorities to stop radioactive contamination in Gansu province. Three Gorges activist Fu Xiancai who was assaulted and paralyzed after being questioned at a police station, numerous journalists such as New York Times researcher Zhao Yan, and religious practitioners and ethnic minorities. Not only are dissidents imprisoned for criticizing China's totalitarian regime, but the lawyers who defend them are being persecuted as well. For instance blind lawyer Chen Guangcheng is imprisoned for defending victims of forced abortions and sterilizations, as is Gao Zhisheng for sending a letter to the government condemning its practices. Moreover, these cases are only the ones of which the international community is aware; the reality is that unknown numbers are currently being harassed, arrested, tortured and imprisoned. The Chinese government will continue to quell political and civil unrest to maintain power and control.

CONCLUSION

The U.S. Congress should send a strong signal to the Chinese government that the world will not accept the human rights violations that are occurring in China. The Chinese people deserve the fundamental rights to a just legal system, to practice religion, to unionize, to plan their families, and to freely express themselves. While economic improvements have been made, China continues to deny its people dignity and basic rights. The U.S. must not remain silent any longer.

HONORING DR. MARGARET ANN HARRISON HILL FOR 40 YEARS OF ACHIEVEMENTS IN EDUCATION

HON. JERRY LEWIS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 17, 2007

Mr. LEWIS of California. Madam Speaker, I rise today in order to recognize Dr. Margaret

Ann Harrison Hill, an esteemed educator and public servant who is retiring after 40 years of top level service. I am honored to pay tribute to this outstanding community leader, and hope that my colleagues will join me in recognizing her achievements.

As many of my colleagues know, resources are essential tools for properly educating students. Dr. Hill understands this necessity, and throughout her career has served to increase the amount of materials available to teachers nationwide. As project director of the SCORE online program, Dr. Hill has overseen the creation of a database of educational resources that serves a wide range of teachers across the country. For 5 years Dr. Hill codirected Footsteps to Freedom, a project which aids educators in developing materials that inculcate study of the Underground Railroad into classroom curriculum. She has served as the curriculum coordinator for the San Bernardino County Superintendent of Schools, developing and implementing training programs that expand the leadership and instruction capacity of San Bernardino educators.

The "We the People Program" has been a tremendous success in my district under the leadership of Dr. Hill. Under the program, Dr. Hill has coordinated civic education training programs, and has expanded student knowledge of the political process by facilitating mock congressional hearings on constitutional issues. Dr. Hill has contributed her writing to several prominent publications, and has developed and written grant proposals that have helped to secure funding for important educational programs. She has served on countless educational advisory and planning boards and has remained a sought-after presenter at educational conferences in California and throughout the Nation.

Dr. Hill's commitment to social studies education has not gone unnoticed. Throughout her years in teaching, she has been the recipient of several awards. In 2001, Dr. Hill was chosen to receive the Hilda Taba Award for Outstanding History-Social Science Leadership in California, the highest honor presented by the California Council for the Social Studies. Dr. Hill has also been presented with awards from her own community, being named Outstanding Educator in Social Studies by the Inland Empire Council, and receiving the Service Award from the Inland Empire Consortium for International Studies.

Madam Speaker, Dr. Hill's retirement will undoubtedly leave San Bernardino County with a difficult void to fill. Her exemplary commitment to her students and peers is seldom seen, and I take great pleasure in knowing that many of the children residing in my district have been fortunate enough to learn from Dr. Hill. It is with honor that I congratulate Dr. Hill on her achievements, and wish her well in her future endeavors.

MEDICARE PRESCRIPTION DRUG PRICE NEGOTIATION ACT OF 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. JOHN D. DINGELL

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 12, 2007

Mr. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I submit the following for the RECORD for H.R. 4.

AMERICAN DIABETES ASSOCIATION,
Alexandria, VA, Jan 12, 2007.

Hon. SHELLEY MOORE CAPITO,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE CAPITO: On behalf of the 20.8 million adults and children living with diabetes in the United States, we write to let you know that the American Diabetes Association remains neutral on the issue of requiring the Department of Health and Human Services to negotiate for lower drug prices.

We understand that leading up to the debate on the Medicare Prescription Drug Price Negotiation Act of 2007 (H.R. 4) your office received a letter from one of the Association's local offices asking that you vote against H.R. 4. While we respect your right to have read the letter you received on the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives on January 12, 2007, we must retract the opposition offered in that letter. The structure of our Association is one in which all policy positions come out of the National Office and the letter you received was crafted in error. With regard to H.R. 4, the Association took no formal position.

Please know that the availability and cost of medications is of great importance to the Association. However, we have historically not been involved to the level of supporting or opposing specific strategies through which to lower prices or make medications available. When Part D was proposed and debated, for example, we remained neutral on the actual market-based construct of the program.

Thank you for your understanding of this situation. And, again please accept our apologies for the confusion. If you have any questions or would like to further discuss our position, please have your staff contact Andrea LaVecchia, Associate Manager of Government Affairs and Advocacy at (703) 253-2323.

Sincerely,

JAMES SCHLICHT,
Executive Vice President,
Government Affairs & Advocacy.

FAIR MINIMUM WAGE ACT OF 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. BETTY SUTTON

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 10, 2007

Ms. SUTTON. Mr. Speaker, one of the greatest measures of our success as elected representatives will be the impact our actions have on the silent majority of working class poor in America.

This Congress, to its shame, has ignored these Americans for over a decade now in favor of an embarrassing collection of legislative excess that favored the connected few.

Today, we put an end to it.

During the course of the campaign that ended just a few months ago, I met a woman whose story I have carried with me all the way to Congress.

She was working at the snack bar at the local bowling alley and she was working her heart out.

As she shared her story with me, it became terribly apparent that despite valiant efforts, she was struggling mightily to make ends meet for her family.

This fine woman you see was a single mother who had a teenage daughter at home, a daughter she worried about because she

just had too little time to spend with her because she worked so much.

And this fine woman also had a son who had recently graduated from high school, a son who intended to join the military to serve his country and hopefully find a way to a higher education and a brighter future.

The problem was her son had a medical condition which precluded him from military service. And by the way, as hard as she worked, this fine woman did not have any health insurance.

As this proud woman and mother told me of her struggles to build a future for her family, her exhaustion grew and her strength diminished as she tried to think of a phone number where she could be reached.

You see, this fine woman not only worked at the local bowling alley, she also worked two other jobs where she earned minimum wage.

As she talked, her dilemma was apparent—she worried that her jobs were robbing her of the time her kids needed to spend with her but she knew that she needed to work all three minimum wage jobs just to provide for them.

This is not a choice that any woman or man should have to make and our Congress over the last decade should be ashamed for not helping this fine woman and tens of millions more hard working Americans.

As you can see from this very real and personal story, raising the minimum wage is not about politics, it's about traditional American values, it's about fairness and opportunity, it's about changing the way we treat our working men and women.

It's about paying rent, putting food on the table and paying for our children to go to college.

That is why today's vote to increase the minimum wage is so important, not just for our Nation's working families, not just for that proud woman and mother working at the bowling alley, but for her children, for our future.

Today with Americans supporting us, we start fighting for those who have been for far too long neglected.

IN MEMORY OF KATHERYN REEVES JEAN

HON. MIKE ROSS

OF ARKANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 17, 2007

Mr. ROSS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory of Katheryn Reeves Jean, who passed away January 14, 2007, in Magnolia, Arkansas.

Katheryn Reeves Jean was a pillar of the community of Magnolia and of greater Columbia County for decades. Mrs. Jean was a homemaker and president of Reeves Land and Timber Company. She also served the community in numerous ways, including Chairman of the Columbia County Election Commission, Justice of the Peace for Columbia County and Director of Farmer's Real Estate.

Mrs. Jean was a member of the Jackson Street Church of Christ, Quota Club International and the local and state Republican Party. Mrs. Jean was a former Girl Scout troop leader and a den mother for the Boy Scouts of America. Her dedication to making Magnolia and South Arkansas a better place to live could not have been greater.