



City of Winchester, Virginia

John David Smith, Jr., Mayor
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Proclamation for Falun Dafa Day

WHEREAS, Falun Dafa, also known as Falun Gong, an ancient Chinese spiritual and meditation discipline of the Buddhist tradition, following the principles of "truthfulness, compassion, and tolerance," is proven to be an effective way to improve citizens' holistic health; and

WHEREAS, Falun Dafa has shared traditional Chinese cultural values with more than 100 million people in over 100 countries around the world since its 1992 introduction in China, and with hundreds of local citizens since its 1996 introduction in Virginia, where there are many volunteer-run practice sites offering both in-person and online instruction in its easy-to-learn, enjoyable exercises free of charge; and

WHEREAS, Falun Dafa has gratefully accepted invitations from, and cheerfully participated in, the Shenandoah Apple Blossom Festival in Winchester for the past two years; and

WHEREAS, since July 1999, Falun Dafa practitioners' peaceful resistance and moral courage in the face of the unprecedented persecution by the Chinese Communist regime have touched every kind-hearted human being, have changed history, and continue to inspire all who face this ever-aggressive regime today; and


WHEREAS, state-controlled Chinese media inside and outside of China use vilification and slander to dehumanize people who practice Falun Dafa, to justify the brutal persecution in China, and to encourage discrimination against them even on US soil, including in Virginia, leading the US House of Representatives to pass a resolution (H.Con.Res.304) to condemn harassment, threats, and discrimination directed against Falun Dafa practitioners in the US; and

WHEREAS, in June of 2016, the US House unanimously passed a resolution (H.R. 343), expressing concern over persistent and credible reports of systematic, state-sanctioned organ harvesting from non-consenting prisoners of conscience—including large numbers of Falun Dafa practitioners—in China; and

WHEREAS, Falun Dafa practitioners in Virginia have gone to many counties, cities, and towns throughout the Commonwealth to warn citizens about the risks of traveling to China for an organ transplant, after which two dozen local governments in Virginia, upon receiving petitions from over 5000 constituents and hearing public testimony from concerned citizens and victims of persecution in China, adopted resolutions to educate their residents on this issue;

Now therefore, I, John David Smith, Jr., Mayor of the City of Winchester, Virginia, do hereby honor Falun Dafa and its founder, Mr. Li Hongzhi, by proclaiming May 13, 2022, as "Falun Dafa Day"; and be it further Proclaimed that the City of Winchester stands in solidarity with Falun Dafa practitioners in their freedom of belief and conscience as we recognize their contributions to the community; and we strongly condemn the imprisonment, torture and state-sponsored forced organ harvesting of Falun Gong practitioners and demands an immediate end to the persecution of Falun Gong by the Chinese communist regime.




John David Smith, Jr.
Mayor

"We will continue to work to create a safe, vibrant, sustainable community while striving to constantly improve the quality of life for our citizens and economic partners."