



RESOLUTION #21-018

TO EDUCATE ESSEX COUNTY RESIDENTS AND MEDICAL COMMUNITY ON THE RISKS OF TRAVELING TO CHINA FOR ORGAN TRANSPLANT IN LIGHT OF RECENT REPORTS OF STATE-SPONSORED ORGAN HARVESTING FROM PRISONERS OF CONSCIENCE

WHEREAS, extensive and credible reports have revealed mass killing of prisoners of conscience in the People's Republic of China, primarily practitioners of the Chinese spiritual practice of Falun Gong, but also other religious and ethnic minority groups, in order to obtain organs for transplants; and

WHEREAS, The China Tribunal, an independent tribunal sitting in London chaired by Sir Geoffrey Nice, who was a prosecutor at the international criminal tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, concluded on June 18, 2019, in a unanimous determination at the end of its year-long hearings, that the killing of detainees in China for organ transplants is continuing and victims include imprisoned followers of the Falun Gong movement; and

WHEREAS, the 2017 Freedom House report, "The Battle for China's Spirit," states that "available evidence suggests that forced extraction of organs from Falun Gong detainees for sale in transplant operations has occurred on a large scale and may be continuing"; and

WHEREAS, an investigative report published in June 2016 by human rights attorney David Matas, former Canadian Secretary of State for Asia-Pacific, David Kilgour, and journalist Ethan Gutmann, estimated that China is performing transplants at a rate amounting to "an industrial-scale, state-directed organ transplantation system, controlled through national policies and funding, and implicating both the military and civilian healthcare systems"; and

WHEREAS, Falun Gong, a spiritual practice involving meditative "qigong" exercises and centered on the values of truthfulness, compassion, and forbearance, became immensely popular in China in the late 1990s with multiple estimates placing the number of practitioners at upwards of seventy million (70,000,000); and

WHEREAS, in July 1999, the Chinese Communist Party launched an intensive, nationwide persecution designed to eradicate the spiritual practice of Falun Gong. Hundreds of thousands of Falun Gong practitioners have been detained extra legally in Chinese reeducation through-labor camps, detention centers, and prisons, where physical and mental torture is common; and

WHEREAS, in June 2016, the United States House of Representatives unanimously passed House Resolution 343, condemning the systemic, state-sanctioned organ harvesting from practitioners of Falun Gong and other prisoners of conscience; and

WHEREAS, Essex County residents should be fully informed of the organ source before they make the decision to engage in organ transplant tourism in China;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY the Essex County Board of Supervisors condemns, in the strongest possible terms, the persecution of any prisoners of conscience and illegal organ harvesting of all prisoners of conscience and.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we encourage the United States government to thoroughly investigate organ transplant practices in China and take all reasonable steps to end the practice of nonconsensual organ harvesting and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the residents and the medical community servicing Essex County and the immediate region be informed about the risks of travel to China for organ transplants to help prevent local citizens from becoming accomplices to illegal forced organ harvesting from prisoners of conscience; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this resolution be provided to the Governor of Virginia, Virginia's General Assembly, Virginia's congressional delegation and two U.S. Senators and the Virginia Department of Health.

ADOPTED this 12th day of October 2021.

CERTIFICATION OF ADOPTION RESOLUTION

The undersigned Clerk of the Board of Supervisors of the County of Essex, Virginia certified that the Resolution set forth above was duly adopted during a public meeting on the 12th day of October 2021 by a majority of the members of the Essex County Board of Supervisors with the following votes:

- AYE: Johnson, Gill, Magruder, Smith
- NAY: Akers
- ABSTENTION: NONE
- ABSENT: NONE

Signed this 14th day of October 2021.

ATTEST:



Michael A. Lombardo, Clerk
Board of Supervisors of the County of Essex, Virginia

