



Commonwealth of Virginia

General Assembly
RICHMOND

July 10, 2020

The Honorable Michael Pompeo
Secretary of State
United States Department of State
2201 C Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20230

Re: Religious Persecution and Forced Organ Harvesting in the People's Republic of China

Dear Mr. Secretary:

This July marks 21 years since the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) launched an intensive, nation-wide persecution to eradicate the spiritual practice of Falun Gong. In addition to mental and physical torture, the immoral practice of non-consenting organ harvesting by the CCP has also been documented. Today, the undersigned members of the Virginia General Assembly write to request forceful, and sustained action by the United States to protect religious liberty and to bring an end to this inhumane practice.

We recognize and appreciate the bi-partisan efforts already taken to raise awareness of this tragedy, including House Resolution 343 (2016, Rep. Ros-Lehtinen) and Senate Resolution 274 (2019, Sen. Menendez). These resolutions detail in stark terms the horror being inflicted on practitioners of Falun Gong and other religious and ethnic minority groups in China. We also appreciate your statements that religious freedom is a top priority for the Administration and that the United States "will not stand idly by while abusers of this first American freedom persecute, discriminate against, and revile people because of their beliefs."¹

While the resolutions provide the history of persecution and cite investigations by well-respected individuals and organizations, they cannot compare to the powerful, gut-wrenching stories directly from victim's families and survivors. These are just a few excerpts from a survivor now living in Fairfax, Virginia: "Left in death bed with four limbs tied." "Handcuffed and hung in painful position." "Violently force-fed." "High-voltage electric shock." "Not allowed to sleep for three days." We cannot even imagine having to endure this torture. And fortunately, from the safety of our own nation, we do not have to. But our position affords us with an even greater responsibility to act.

In addition, we ask that the Department of State take action here at home to help educate Americans about the practice of non-consensual organ harvesting in China. Organ transplants are a marvel of science and can be a selfless gesture that gives the gift of life. However, organ

¹ Secretary Pompeo Tweet, June 10, 2020.

transplants should never be conducted under force or duress. We are concerned that patients from the United States who go to China for organ transplants do not know that the organs they may receive are from political prisoners. Increasing our own education efforts will help to reduce the demand for this immoral practice.

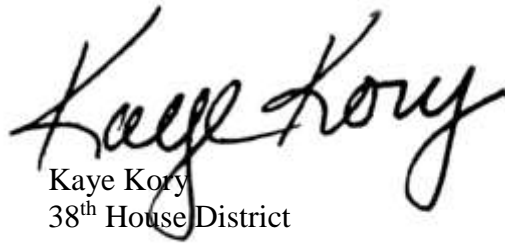
In China, people are risking their lives to raise awareness of the truth. We are writing in solidarity with the survivors and those who can no longer speak for themselves. We ask for your leadership, and the considerable leverage of the United States, to ensure that next year we are not observing 22 years of persecution.

Thank you for your consideration.

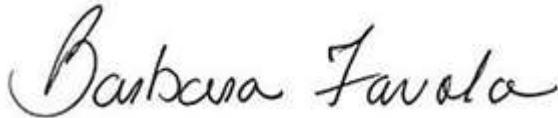
Sincerely,



David L. Bulova
37th House District



Kaye Kory
38th House District



Barbara Favola
31st Senate District

Copies to:

Honorable Tim Kaine, U.S. Senator
Honorable Mark Warner, U.S. Senator
Honorable Rob Wittman, Congressman, 1st District
Honorable Elaine Luria, Congresswoman, 2nd District
Honorable Bobby Scott, Congressman, 3rd District
Honorable Donald McEachin, Congressman, 4th District
Honorable Denver Riggleman, Congressman, 5th District
Honorable Ben Cline, Congressman, 6th District
Honorable Abigail Spanberger, Congresswoman, 7th District
Honorable Don Beyer, Congressman, 8th District
Honorable Morgan Griffith, Congressman, 9th District
Honorable Jennifer Wexton, Congresswoman, 10th District
Honorable Gerry Connolly, Congressman, 11th District