



**ERIC ZEHR**

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COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA

**HOUSE OF DELEGATES**

RICHMOND

COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS:  
EDUCATION  
TRANSPORTATION

February 2025

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

Re: Religious Persecution of Falun Gong Practitioners by the People's Republic of China

Dear Mr. Secretary:

This year marks the 26<sup>th</sup> anniversary of a humanitarian tragedy. In 1999, the People's Republic of China (PRC) initiated a large-scale effort to eradicate the practice of Falun Gong – a peaceful spiritual practice exercised by millions of people. As you know, the crackdown has been brutal. The practice of Falun Gong has been banned. Books have been destroyed. Fundamental rights have been trampled. Members of the Falun Gong community have been mentally and physically tortured in prisons and re-education/forced labor centers. The immoral practice of non-consenting organ harvesting by the PRC has also been documented.

Today, the undersigned members of the Virginia General Assembly feel compelled to request the United States to redouble our efforts to use our moral and economic weight to protect religious liberty and bring an end to this inhumane persecution.

We write because many of the survivors of this persecution are now residents and citizens of the United States. They are our friends, neighbors, and constituents. And most importantly, they are our fellow human beings. Each year, members of Falun Gong visit the Virginia General Assembly to tell their stories. They are gut-wrenching: "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." "Husband killed for protecting me." "Blood tested for forced organ harvesting." One survivor brought two jackets she made while in a forced labor camp. Similar products are exported to the American and European markets, with consumers unaware of their origins.

We applaud and recognize the bi-partisan efforts already taken by members of United States Congress to raise awareness of this tragedy and to end persecution by the PRC. We also deeply

appreciate the U.S. Department of State's recent press statement recognizing a quarter of a century of repression and abuse of Falun Gong and the call to "promote accountability for those responsible for human rights abuses and violations."<sup>1</sup>

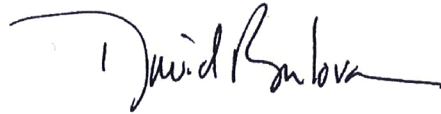
Finally, we ask the Department of State to take action to help educate Americans about this tragedy and what they can do to be part of the solution. Specifically, we are concerned that patients from the United States who go to China for organ transplants do not know that the organs they may receive are from political prisoners. We should also do all we can to ensure that products from forced labor camps are not imported into the United States.

Next year, the United States will celebrate the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Declaration of Independence. We ask for your continued leadership for those who are still fighting, and dying, for even the most basic of liberties.

Sincerely,



Eric Zehr  
51<sup>st</sup> House District



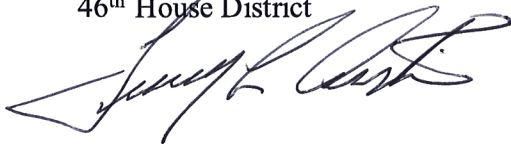
David L. Bulova  
11<sup>th</sup> House District



Jed Arnold  
46<sup>th</sup> House District



Jason Ballard  
42<sup>nd</sup> House District



Amanda Batten  
71<sup>st</sup> House District



Robert Bloxom Jr.  
100<sup>th</sup> House District



Ellen Campbell  
36<sup>th</sup> House District



A.C. Cordoza  
86<sup>th</sup> House District

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<sup>1</sup> U.S. Department of State Press Statement, "25 Years of PRC Government Repression and Abuse of Falun Gong," July 20, 2024.

Carrie Coyner  
75<sup>th</sup> House District

Will Davis  
39<sup>th</sup> House District

Mark Earley Jr.  
73<sup>rd</sup> House District

Baxter Ennis  
89<sup>th</sup> House District

Hyland Fowler Jr.  
59<sup>th</sup> House District

Nick Freitas  
62<sup>nd</sup> House District

Todd C. Gilbert  
33<sup>rd</sup> House District

Tom Garrett  
56<sup>th</sup> House District

Tim Griffin  
53<sup>rd</sup> House District

Chad Green  
69<sup>th</sup> House District

Keith Hodges  
68<sup>th</sup> House District


Geary Higgins  
30<sup>th</sup> House District

Terry G. Kilgore  
45<sup>th</sup> House District


Hillary P. Kent  
67<sup>th</sup> House District

Ian Lovejoy  
22<sup>nd</sup> House District


James A. Leftwich  
90<sup>th</sup> House District




Joe McNamara  
40<sup>th</sup> House District



Paul Milde  
64<sup>th</sup> House District



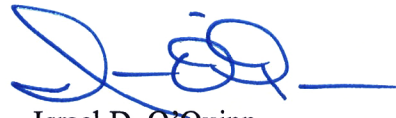
James W. Morefield  
43rd House District




Delores Oates  
31st House District




Chris Obenshain  
41st House District




Israel D. O'Quinn  
44<sup>th</sup> House District




Robert Orrock Sr.  
66<sup>th</sup> House District



Christopher S. Runion  
35<sup>th</sup> House District




Eric Phillips  
48<sup>th</sup> House District



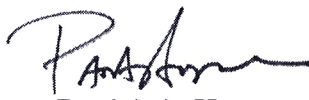
Anne F. Tata  
99th House District



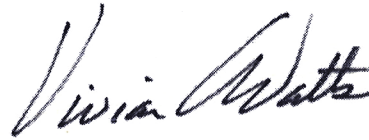
Otto H. Wachsmann Jr.  
83rd House District




Delores L. McQuinn  
81st House District




Patrick A. Hope  
1st House District



Vivian Watts  
14th House District



Wendell S. Walker  
52nd House District



R. Lee Ware Jr.  
72nd House District

Michael J. Webert  
61<sup>st</sup> House District

William Wiley  
32nd House District

Wren Williams  
47th House District

Tony O'Wilt  
34th House District

Thomas C. Wright Jr.  
50th House District

Scott Wyatt  
60th House District

Phillip A. Scott  
63rd House District

Saddam Azlan Salim  
37th Senate District

Bryce E. Reeves  
28th Senate District

Barbara A. Favola  
40th Senate District

Christopher Head  
3rd Senate District

Mark Obenshain  
2nd Senate District

Emily Jordan  
17th Senate District

Mark Peake  
8th Senate District

Copies to:

Honorable Tim Kaine, U.S. Senator

Honorable Mark Warner, U.S. Senator

Honorable Rob Wittman, Congressman, 1st District

Honorable Jennifer Kiggans, Congresswoman, 2nd District

Honorable Bobby Scott, Congressman, 3rd District

Honorable Jennifer McClellan, Congressman, 4th District

Honorable John McGuire, Congressman, 5th District

Honorable Ben Cline, Congressman, 6th District

Honorable Eugene Vindman, Congressman, 7th District

Honorable Don Beyer, Congressman, 8th District

Honorable Morgan Griffith, Congressman, 9th District

Honorable Suhas Subramanyam, Congressman, 10th District

Honorable Gerry Connolly, Congressman, 11th District