

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

September 29, 2014

His Excellency Cui Tiankai
Ambassador
Embassy of the People's Republic of China
3505 International Place, N.W.
Washington, DC 20008

Dear Ambassador Cui,

We are writing to respectfully inquire on the recent conviction of Pastor Zhang Shaojie, leader of the Chinese government-sanctioned Nanle County Christian Church in Henan Province. On July 4, Pastor Zhang was sentenced to 12 years in prison for allegedly engaging in "fraud" and "gathering a crowd to disrupt social order." Such allegations were not proven in court nor did they receive adequate legal consideration.

We understand that the prosecutor in the case failed to call a witness against Pastor Zhang to substantiate these accusations. In addition to lacking witness testimony to provide evidentiary support for the allegations, we understand that Puyang Intermediate Court in Henan Province prohibited Pastor Zhang's defense lawyers from questioning individuals associated with the case.

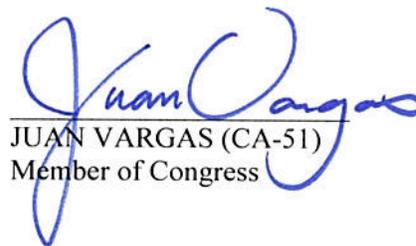
Furthermore, we are especially concerned about the handling of Pastor Zhang's appeal trial. It is our understanding that the Puyang Intermediate Court in Henan Province held a court proceeding on Pastor Zhang's case and issued a verdict rejecting his appeal without notifying Pastor Zhang's lawyers of the trial or the verdict until after it was concluded. Consequently, Pastor Zhang was prohibited from having a fair and transparent appeal trial, denied legal representation for his appeal case, and sentenced to a 12-year prison term without grounds for conviction.

As you know, Pastor Zhang's case has raised considerable attention from the United States Government. Secretary of State John Kerry raised Pastor Zhang's case, stating that his 12-year sentence was "for peaceful advocacy on behalf of his church community." Likewise, Commissioners of the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom recently published an op-ed in which they stated that Pastor Zhang "was convicted on trumped-up criminal charges."

All in all, we are deeply concerned about these allegations against Pastor Zhang and about what these actions mean for rule of law and freedom of religion in China. We respectfully ask for your personal attention to address these issues and secure the release of Pastor Zhang from prison as soon as possible.

Sincerely,


JEFF DUNCAN (SC-03)
Member of Congress


JUAN VARGAS (CA-51)
Member of Congress



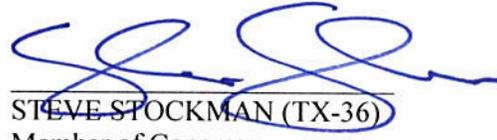
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Member of Congress



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Member of Congress



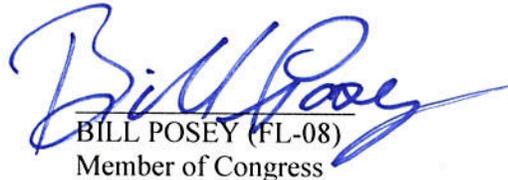
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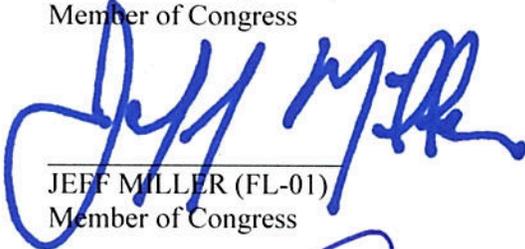

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SEAN P. DUFFY (WI-07)
Member of Congress

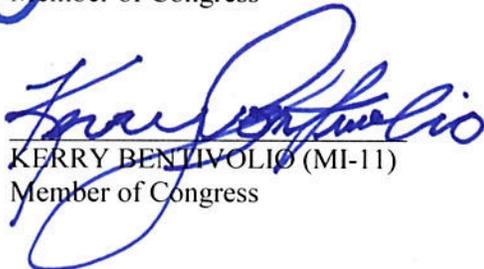

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