

111TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. CON. RES. 151

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

OCTOBER 1, 2009

Received and referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of Congress that China release democratic activist Liu Xiaobo from imprisonment.

Whereas Liu Xiaobo has inspired untold numbers of Chinese people to stare down their government and demand change;

Whereas on December 9, 2008, a diverse group of more than 300 Chinese scholars, writers, lawyers, and activists issued Charter 08, a manifesto calling on the Chinese Communist Party to abandon authoritarian

rule in favor of democracy, the guarantee of human rights, and the rule of law;

Whereas Liu Xiaobo was one of the original signers of Charter 08 and was taken into custody shortly before the manifesto was released, has been detained ever since, and now faces charges of “inciting subversion of state power”;

Whereas Charter 08 documents the widespread failings of the Chinese Communist Party, calls for urgent and extensive political reforms in China, enumerates and endorses the ideas and principles of freedom, human rights, equality, Republicanism, democracy, and constitutional rule, and enumerates 19 recommendations for political reform within Communist China;

Whereas Charter 08 says that “the most fundamental principles of democracy are that the people are sovereign, and that the people select their own government”;

Whereas Chinese authorities violated Chinese law in handling Liu Xiaobo’s case, including keeping him under “residential surveillance” beyond the legal time limit and at an undisclosed location, denying him access to his family or lawyers, and refusing to allow a fellow Charter 08 signatory to represent him;

Whereas the signatories of Charter 08 represent numerous strata of Chinese society, including former members of the Chinese Communist Party;

Whereas the document which caused him to be confined to a windowless room, without access to books or writing materials, is as simple as those in the founding documents of this country which have inspired us all for over 200 years;

Whereas Liu Xiaobo signed his name to those simple but powerful words despite having already spent 20 months in prison for his part in the 1989 protests in Tiananmen Square, and three years in a re-education through labor camp for challenging China's one-party rule; and

Whereas Liu Xiaobo's leadership has inspired the Chinese people and the world: Now, therefore, be it

- 1 *Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate*
- 2 *concurring), That it is the sense of Congress that China's*
- 3 *Government immediately release Liu Xiaobo and begin*
- 4 *making strides toward true representative democracy.*

Passed the House of Representatives October 1, 2009.

Attest:

LORRAINE C. MILLER,

Clerk.