Economic Justice, Center for Responsible Lending, Connecticut Fair Housing Center, Consumer Action, Consumer Federation of America, Consumers Union, Empire Justice Center.

Home Defenders League, The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, NAACP, National Association of Consumer Advocates, National Consumer Law Center (on behalf of its low income clients), National Council of La Raza, National Fair Housing Alliance, New Economic Project, Public Citizen, Woodstock Institute.

TIANANMEN 25 YEARS LATER: FIVE LEADERS WHO WERE THERE

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 13, 2014

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, we recently had the 25th anniversary of when the world watched as students from Beijing's Central Academy of Fine Arts unveiled the replica of the Statue of Liberty in Tiananmen Square. It was an amazing sight to behold, this enduring symbol of liberty standing face-to-face with the dictator Mao Zedong's portrait.

It was a moment when we all dreamed that the Tiananmen Square demonstrations would become a triumph for freedom and democracy. Unfortunately, China's Communist leaders sought to hang on to power through force. They sent tanks and soldiers into Beijing to ''clear the Square'' on the evening of June 3 and June 4.

The beating, the bayonetting, torture, and murder of students and the ubiquitous display of tanks turned the dream of freedom into a bloody nightmare. At a hearing that I recently held, we had five witnesses to this tragic scene in world history so that this time in China will not fade from memory, but will remind us of the longing for freedom that remains within the Chinese people.

We want to remember the extraordinary sacrifice endured by thousands of peaceful Chinese democracy activists. Some may prefer to look past or even trivialize the slaughter of innocents by Chinese soldiers. But the memory of the dead and those arrested, tortured, and exiled requires us to honor them, respect their noble aspirations for fundamental freedoms, and recommit ourselves to the struggle for freedom and human rights in China.

The government of China continues to go to astounding lengths to erase the memory of the Tiananmen demonstrations and their violent suppression. The Internet is censored, citizens holding private discussions or public commemorations are harassed and detained, and we still have no account of those who died, those arrested, those disappeared or those executed.

It is my promise that we will always remember—always remember—Tiananmen as long as the Chinese people cannot discuss its significance openly without harassment or arrest.

When the tanks rolled down the Square on June 4, 1989, all of China suffered—mothers lost sons, fathers lost daughters and China lost an idealistic generation of future leaders.

China's loss has been America's gain. Our witnesses today—exiles and refugees from their native land—have contributed mightily to the American fabric. Out of tragedy and disillusionment, they have created lives that make America stronger. They are entrepreneurs and pastors, businesspeople and academics, members of the military and civil society leaders.

The Chinese government may call them criminals and hooligans, but one day soon they will be called heroes.

The people testifying here today are also our conscience—as are all advocates from freedom and human rights such as Chen Guangcheng and Harry Wu and others in the audience today. There will always be those who want to downplay human rights in relations with China. But the people here today remind us that the people of China suffered for freedom, bled for liberty, and demanded justice, democracy and an end to corruption. These demands were made 25 years ago, and they still fire the imagination of the Chinese people today.

More than ever, the U.S. needs a robust human rights diplomacy with China. We need policies that actively promote human rights, freedom of speech, Internet freedom, and the rule of law. We must support the advocates for peaceful change and the champions of liberty and clearly signal our support for those seeking rights and freedoms for all China's citizens, not only for those seeking to pad the economic bottom-line.

Such leadership is needed now because China is in the midst of a severe crackdown on human rights advocates and freedom of speech. Last year was the worst year, since the 1990s, for arrests and imprisonment of dissidents. More than 230 people have been detained for their human rights advocacy. In the past month Beijing has detained two dozen activists for simply seeking to commemorate the Tiananmen anniversary in private.

And China remains one of the world's worst offenders of human rights overall. It remains the torture capital of the world. Religious freedom abuses continue with impunity. And ethnic minority groups face repression when they peacefully seek rights to their culture and language.

Hundreds of millions of women have been forced to abort their precious babies because of a draconian attempt to limit population growth. China's one-child policy, even if it is slightly modified, is a demographic and human rights disaster. The preference for having boys has led to a gender imbalance and a mass extermination of girls. This is not only a massive gender crime, but a security problem as well. Experts are coming to the conclusion that China's gender imbalance will lead to crime, social instability, worker shortages, sex and bride trafficking, and will make the possibility of war more likely.

Despite the country's stunning economic growth over the past two decades, Beijing's leaders still remain terrified of their own people. China's ruling Communist Party would rather stifle, imprison or even kill its own people than defer to their demands for freedom and rights.

Repression has not dimmed the desires of the Chinese people for freedom and reform. There is an inspiring drive in China to keep fighting for freedom under very difficult and dangerous conditions. As our witnesses today will surely attest, the U.S. must demonstrate clearly and robustly that democratic reforms and human rights are a critical national interest.

We want to see a more democratic China, one that respects human rights, and is governed by the rule of law, because a more democratic China will be a productive and peaceful partner rather than a strategic and hostile competitor.

This future also should be in China's interests, because there is growing evidence that the most prosperous and stable societies are those that protect religious freedom, the freedom of speech, and the rule of law.

I believe that someday China will be free. The people of China will be able to enjoy all of their God-given rights. And a nation of free Chinese men and women will honor, applaud, and celebrate the heroes of Tiananmen Square and all those who sacrificed so much, and so long, for freedom.

AUTHORIZING THE USE OF ROTUNDA FOR CEREMONY COMMEMORATING 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF ENACTMENT OF THE CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1964

SPEECH OF

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 9, 2014

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H. Con. Res. 100, which authorizes the use of the Rotunda of the Capitol for a ceremony to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the enactment of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. It is fitting and proper that the Rotunda of the Capitol is the venue for the commemoration for one of the consequential governmental actions since the issuance of the Emancipation Proclamation.

On July 2, 1964, fifty years ago next month, President Lyndon B. Johnson signed the act that profoundly changed our country and brought about the greatest reduction in economic and social inequality among Americans in history.

Mr. Speaker, today it is difficult to imagine there once was a time in our country when blacks and whites could not eat together in public restaurants, use the same public restrooms, stay at the same hotels, or attend the same schools. It is hard to believe today that just 50 years ago, discrimination on the ground of race was a legal and socially accepted practice.

But the Civil Rights Act of 1964 changed that.

The Civil Rights Act outlawed discrimination and segregation in employment, public accommodations, and education on the ground of race, gender, religion, or national origin. This act became the soil from which our country flourished; opportunities were bred and dreams were born.

This change did not happen overnight or by accident. It took hard work and courage and an unwavering faith that America could live up to the true meaning of its creed. Fortunately for our country, there were such men and women who had that faith and courage. People like the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Whitney Young, Rosa Parks, and JOHN LEWIS are just a few of the many noble leaders who took a stand for freedom and risked their lives