means by which the free market maximizes human happiness.

Currently, consumers are less than sovereign in the education ''market.'' Funding decisions are increasingly controlled by the federal government. Because ''he who pays the piper calls the tune,'' public, and even private schools, are paying greater attention to the dictates of federal ''educrats'' while ignoring the wishes of the parents to an ever-greater degree. As such, the lack of consumer sovereignty in education is destroying parental control of education and replacing it with state control. Loss of control is a key reason why so many of America's parents express dissatisfaction with the educational system.

According to a survey conducted by Education Next/Harvard PEPG, the majority of Americans support education tax credits. This poll also found strong support for education tax credits among liberals, moderates, conservatives, low-income individuals, African-Americans, and public-school employees. This is just one of numerous studies and public opinion polls showing that Americans want Congress to get the federal bureaucracy out of the schoolroom and give parents more control over their children's education.

Today, Congress can fulfill the wishes of the American people for greater control over their children's education by simply allowing parents to keep more of their hard-earned money to spend on education rather than force them to send it to Washington to support education programs reflective only of the values and priorities of Congress and the federal bureaucracy.

The $5,000 tax credit will make a better education affordable for millions of parents. Madame Speaker, many parents who would choose to send their children to private, religious, or parochial schools are unable to afford the tuition, in large part because of the enormous tax burden imposed on the American family by Washington.

The Family Education Freedom Act also benefits parents who choose to send their children to public schools. Parents of children in public schools may use this credit to help improve their local schools by helping finance the purchase of educational tools such as computers or to ensure their local schools can offer enriching extracurricular activities such as music programs. Parents of public school students may also wish to use the credit to pay for special services, such as tutoring, for their children.

Increasing parental control of education is superior to funneling more federal tax dollars, followed by greater federal control, into the schools. A recent review of the relevant research conducted by Andrew J. Coulson of the CATO Institute shows that increasing parental controls increases academic achievement, efficiency, the orderliness of the classrooms, and the quality of school facilities. Not surprisingly, graduates of education system controlled by parents tend to achieve higher levels of education and earn more than their counterparts in bureaucratically controlled education systems.

Clearly, enactment of the Family Education Freedom Act is the best thing this Congress could do to improve public education. Furthermore, a greater reliance on parental expenditures rather than government tax dollars will help make the public schools into true community schools that reflect the wishes of parents and the interests of the students.

The Family Education Freedom Act will also aid those parents who choose to educate their children at home. Home schooling has become an increasingly popular, and successful, method of educating children. Home schooled children out-perform their public school peers by 30 to 37 percentile points across all subjects on nationally standardized achievement exams. Home schooling parents spend thousands of dollars annually, in addition to the wages forgone by the spouse who forgoes outside employment, in order to educate their children in the loving environment of the home.

Ultimately, Madam Speaker, this bill is about freedom. Parental control of child rearing, especially education, is one of the bulwarks of liberty. No Nation can remain free when the State has greater influence over the knowledge and values transmitted to children than the family.

By moving to restore the primacy of parents to education, the Family Education Freedom Act will not only improve America's education, it will restore a parent's right to choose how best to educate one's own child, a fundamental freedom that has been eroded by the increase in federal education expenditures and the corresponding decrease in the ability of parents to provide for their children's education out of their own pockets. I call on all my colleagues to join me in allowing parents to devote more of their resources to their children's education and less to feed the wasteful Washington bureaucracy by supporting the Family Education Freedom Act.

FREE LIU XIAOBO

HON. FRANK R. WOLF

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 2, 2009

Mr. WOLF. Madam Speaker, I would like to call the attention of my colleagues to the following letter written by Liu Xia, the wife of imprisoned Chinese human rights activist Liu Xiaobo. Liu Xiaobo is the leader of the Charter '08 movement which calls on the Chinese government to implement democratic reforms. His courageous leadership caused the Chinese security forces to take Mr. Liu from his home in Beijing on December 8, 2008. I call on my colleagues in the Congress and the Administration to advocate for the immediate and unconditional release of Liu Xiaobo.

APRIL 1, 2009.

Hon. FRANK WOLF,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN WOLF, Please forgive me for writing to you directly, but it is only out of the most desperate of circumstances that I do so.

As you may already know, my husband, Liu Xiaobo, was taken from our home by Chinese police on December 8th, 2008 after he and more than three hundred other Chinese citizens signed Charter 08, a manifesto modeled after the Czechoslovakian Charter 77 that appeals for comprehensive democracy and human rights in China. Xiaobo is a writer who cares for nothing more than his duty as an intellectual to speak out for the disadvantaged in society. Now, however, he cannot even protect his own rights.

One hundred fourteen days have now passed since my husband's disappearance. On two occasions (01/01/2009 and 03/20/2009) police took me to an undisclosed location where I was permitted to meet with him and share a meal together. During our conversations, which were closely monitored, my husband told me that he has been kept in solitary confinement in a closed room measuring approximately ten square meters in size. A single light bulb is his only source of light. And of the more than 60 books I had brought him, he received only a few, the rest having been confiscated by the prison officials.

In the three to four months that have passed since his abduction (I can find no other suitable words to describe his situation, as no arrest warrant or other official documents were presented to justify his detention), nearly all of the other 300 signatories have been summoned and investigated by the police. It is obvious to me that the authorities are attempting to gather evidence of my husband's ''crime,'' which will most likely be designated as ''inciting the subversion of state power.'' I fear that the government wants to carry out a sham trial and hand down a severe sentence to my husband.

This is the fourth time that my husband has been dragged away from our home in front of my eyes. When my husband was released from prison in 1990, after serving half a year in prison for his participation in the 1989, pro-democracy demonstrations at Tiananmen Square, he apologized to me because he had decided during that time that he never wants to have children. As he explained, ''I want to continue working as a writer. You may lose me again, but I do not want see a child lose its father.'' Nor do I. His words came true in 1996 when he disappeared behind bars for three more years, owing to writings of his that promoted freedom and democracy. Now, I am alone once again. I continue writing letters to him, knowing that he will never receive them, just as the letters he has sent me in the past hundred or so days have never reached my hands.

I plead with you to help my husband in regaining his freedom. He has done nothing but to give voice to the thoughts and wishes that are shared by many in my country. I will be forever in your debt if you can provide him with any assistance.

Sincerely yours,

LIU XIA.

INDUSTRIAL HEMP FARMING ACT

HON. RON PAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 2, 2009

Mr. PAUL. Madam Speaker, I rise to introduce the Industrial Hemp Farming Act. The Industrial Hemp Farming Act requires the Federal Government to respect State laws allowing the growing of industrial hemp.

Eight States—Hawaii, Kentucky, Maine, Maryland, Montana, North Dakota, Vermont, and West Virginia—allow industrial hemp production or research in accord with State laws. However, Federal law is standing in the way of farmers in these States growing what may be a very profitable crop. Because of current Federal law, all hemp included in products sold in the United States must be imported instead of being grown by American farmers.

Since 1970, the Federal Controlled Substances Act's inclusion of industrial hemp in the schedule one definition of marijuana has prohibited American farmers from growing industrial hemp despite the fact that industrial