

Statement of the Honorable Randy Hultgren (IL-14)

Highlighting the Case of Prisoner of Conscience  
Zhu Yufu

The Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission  
Defending Freedoms Hearing  
On the Plight of Prisoners of Conscience around the World

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HVC-210

- Good morning. I would like to thank my colleagues and Commission Co-chairmen Frank Wolf and Jim McGovern for convening this important hearing.
- I also want to commend each of the panelists testifying here today and the organizations they represent for their tireless efforts on behalf of prisoners of conscience everywhere. I wholeheartedly support your work.
- This hearing presents the ideal opportunity for me to bring attention to the plight of one prisoner of conscience in particular – Zhu Yufu.
- Today, as I speak, Zhu Yufu is spending his 696<sup>th</sup> day behind the walls of the overcrowded Zhejiang Prison Number 4 in China.
- An advocate for democracy, Christian dissident, and poet, Zhu Yufu started the “May 4 Monthly,” a pro-democracy publication and was elected head of the magazine.
- Subsequently, he was often summoned by authorities and his house was frequently searched.
- Zhu actively supported the students’ democracy movement and was one of the founders of the China Democracy Party.
- For this, Zhu was arrested on the false charge of “inciting subversion of state power,” sentenced to prison, and deprived of his political rights.

- He is a prisoner of conscience, unable to enjoy the fundamental freedoms enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.
- Today, Zhu Yufu languishes in prison. He suffers from many diseases and his health is extremely poor. Prison authorities refuse to let him seek treatment or medication.
- According to Zhu's wife, prison regulations to relieve overcrowding permit Zhu to be eligible for community supervision or medical parole.
- Yet prison authorities refuse to transfer him. In fact, they have explicitly denied Zhu's release on the basis that he is a political prisoner who opposes the state. Zhu is the only eligible prisoner in the entire prison who is being denied release.
- Zhu Yufu cannot speak for himself, so others, including myself, must advocate on his behalf.
- Last year, as part of the Defending Freedoms Project of the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission, I "adopted" Zhu Yufu as a prisoner of conscience.
- Through this and similar "adoptions" by my colleagues in Congress, we seek to pierce the darkness and shatter the silence that has enveloped Zhu Yufu and others like him.
- Silence is not an option. Silence means Zhu Yufu likely will remain in prison and the government of China will elude accountability for its deplorable human rights violations.
- Thank you for this opportunity to shine a light on the plight of Zhu Yufu and for the efforts of everyone here who are raising their voices on behalf of prisoners of conscience.

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