



For Immediate Release  
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**WOLF CONGRATULATES NOBEL PRIZE WINNER LIU XIAOBO;  
CALLS ON CHINA TO IMPROVE HUMAN RIGHTS RECORD**

Washington, D.C. – Rep. Frank Wolf (VA-10) delivered the following statement at a press conference today urging the release of Chinese dissident and Nobel Peace Prize Winner Liu Xiaobo and calling on the Chinese government to improve its egregious human rights record:

“I would like to start by thanking my colleagues and representatives from the NGO community that are here today to honor Nobel Peace Prize recipient Liu Xiaobo and highlight the plight of human rights defenders in China.

“Liu was a leader in the 1989 Tiananmen Square demonstrations and one of the primary authors of Charter 08, a historic manifesto advocating for democracy and human rights in China. Because of his involvement in the drafting of Charter 08, in December 2009 Liu was sentenced to 11 years in prison.

“In October, the Nobel Committee awarded the prestigious Nobel Peace Prize to Liu Xiaobo for ‘his long and non-violent struggle for fundamental human rights in China.’ On Friday, the award ceremony will be held with an empty chair serving as a solemn reminder that this year’s Nobel Laureate remains languishing in prison. Chinese authorities have placed Liu’s wife under house arrests to ensure that she will not be able to accept the prize on his behalf.

“Since 1901, only three other Nobel Peace Prize winners have been prevented from attending the ceremony to accept their prize. In 1935 Carl von Ossietzky, a German peace activist, was prevented from receiving the prize by the Nazi government. In 1975 Andrei Sakharov, a Russian nuclear scientist, was barred from leaving the Soviet Union to accept the prize. And in 1991, Aung San Suu Kyi, the leader of Burma’s democracy movement, was not allowed to leave the country by the brutal ruling military junta.

“China should be ashamed and embarrassed to be in the company of Nazi Germany, the Soviet Union and Burma. Instead, the Chinese government has launched a diplomatic campaign to encourage other nations to boycott Friday’s ceremony.

“In a public statement China’s Vice Foreign Minister threatened that ‘If they make the wrong choice, they have to bear the consequences.’

“The five countries that have sided with China and will not attend Friday’s ceremony are Russia, Kazakhstan, Cuba, Morocco and Iraq. These five countries which are among the world’s worst human rights abusers, will join China in its shameful boycott.

“It is my hope that President Obama, last year’s Nobel Peace Prize recipient, or Secretary of State Hillary Clinton will join the U.S. Ambassador to Norway at Friday’s ceremony to ensure that the Chinese government knows that the United States will not be bullied or intimidated by idle threats. I am heartened by reports that Speaker Pelosi is considering attending – this too will send a powerful message to the Chinese.

“Liu is representative of the thousands of Chinese prisoners that remain languishing in prisons and labor camps due to their political and religious beliefs. Chinese authorities continue to crackdown on Protestant house church Christians, Catholics, Tibetan Buddhists, Muslim Uyghurs and members of the Falun Gong.

“Today, the House will vote on a resolution congratulating Liu Xiaobo on the Nobel Peace Prize which was introduced by my good friend and distinguished colleague, Congressman Chris Smith of New Jersey. In passing this resolution, the U.S. Congress sends an important message to the dissidents of China and all those who are persecuted around the world. The people of the United States stand with those who sit in their jail cells day-after-day, week-after-week, and year-after-year in their quest for freedom.

“Robert F. Kennedy once said ‘Each time a man stands up for an ideal, or acts to improve the lot of others, or strikes out against injustice, he sends forth a tiny ripple of hope’ and ‘those ripples build a current which can sweep down the mightiest walls of oppression and resistance.’

“The awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize to Liu Xiaobo has sent out that ripple of hope that cannot be stopped. And I believe that in my lifetime, the Chinese people will know true freedom. I look forward to celebrating that day.”