



human rights *first*

American ideals. Universal values.

December 11, 2018

The Honorable James McGovern
Co-Chair, Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission
United States House of Representatives

The Honorable Randy Hultgren
Co-Chair, Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission
United States House of Representatives

Dear Mr. McGovern and Mr. Hultgren,

On behalf of the men and women of Human Rights First, and those brave individuals from around the world with whom we work to protect and promote universal rights, allow me to congratulate you on the tenth anniversary of the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission.

It's fitting that the Lantos Commission would celebrate this milestone as people around the world recognizes the seventieth anniversary of the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. An American patriot and principle architect of the Declaration, Eleanor Roosevelt, understood well that when the United States lives up to its ideals and supports those fighting for freedom and dignity, the world is safer, more just, and more prosperous.

In a time of unprecedented challenge to the Declaration's vision, I commend you, your predecessors as co-chairs, Commission Members, and Commission staff for upholding an unshakable commitment to the principle that "All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights."

The power of the Commission's hearings and programs like the Defending Freedoms Project have saved lives, kept a spotlight on crimes meant to remain in darkness, provided an essential platform for activists and survivors, and served as an invaluable resource for human rights organizations around the world. Like Eleanor Roosevelt and the Honorable Tom Lantos, the work of the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission embodies the best of America. Thank you for all that you do.

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