

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

March 19, 2021

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden  
The President of the United States  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue  
Washington, DC 20500

CC:

The Honorable Anthony J. Blinken  
Secretary of State  
2201 C St NW  
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Mr. President,

Since the outset of your Administration, we have been encouraged by your focus on issues relevant to the Indo-Pacific region and commitment to dedicating the resources necessary to resolve them. As your administration begins to formulate your agenda for the region, we respectfully urge the promotion of human rights in North Korea as a central pillar of our Indo-Pacific strategy and request the immediate appointment of a Special Envoy on North Korean Human Rights Issues.

For over 70 years, the people of North Korea have suffered immensely at the hands of the Kim regime while enduring political repression, famine, forced labor and torture. In response to these conditions, Congress passed the North Korean Human Rights Act of 2004 (P.L. 108-333), which among other mandates, established the position of Special Envoy on North Korean Human Rights Issues. The Act was subsequently reauthorized by Congress in 2008, 2012, and again in 2017. This bipartisan consensus comes from a recognition that the promotion of human rights issues is essential to our national interests and to strengthening American leadership globally.

Formally appointing a special envoy is essential to facilitating the resolution of a number of issues that directly impact Americans, including ensuring the safety of American citizens in North Korea, verifying compliance with humanitarian aid delivery to ensure American tax dollars are not redirected for malign purposes by corrupt officials, and ending the information blockade against independent media outlets.

Importantly, a special envoy would also play a pivotal part in negotiating family reunions between North and South, and between North Koreans and Korean American families. Family separation remains a real and present trauma for many Koreans and Korean Americans and progress towards resolving this issue is essential to building trust and strengthening the resolve

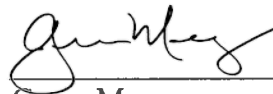
of both parties to work together in good faith towards a peaceful reunification. Further, verifying certain human rights improvements and reforms by North Korea could lend the country credibility to maintain security commitments from future negotiations and denuclearization talks.

Today, the citizens of North Korea live in some of the most brutal and oppressive conditions experienced by any people in the world. The United States must continue its mission of promoting human rights and democracy globally and work with our partners in the international community to ensure no people are unjustly abused by their government. For these reasons Mr. President, we urge you to immediately name a nominee to serve as the next Special Envoy on North Korean Human Rights Issues.

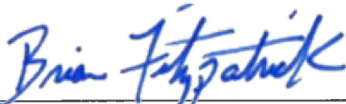
Sincerely,



Young Kim  
Member of Congress



Grace Meng  
Member of Congress



Brian Fitzpatrick  
Member of Congress



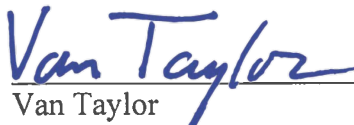
Gerald E. Connolly  
Member of Congress



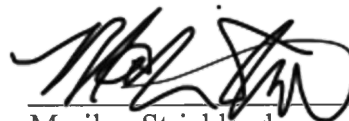
Christopher H. Smith  
Member of Congress



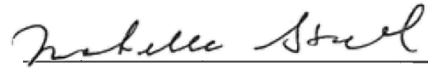
James P. McGovern  
Member of Congress




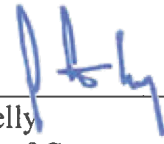
Van Taylor  
Member of Congress



Marilyn Strickland  
Member of Congress

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Michelle Steel  
Member of Congress

  
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Karen Bass  
Member of Congress

  
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Trent Kelly  
Member of Congress