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FREEDOM NOW

MEDIA RELEASE

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U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES AGREES TO RESOLUTION CALLING FOR THE
RELEASE OF NOBEL PEACE PRIZE LAUREATE LIU XIAOBO AND WIFE LIU XIA

Washington, DC: The U.S. House of Representatives agreed to House Resolution (H.Res.) 1717 today, calling for the release of Dr. Liu Xiaobo, the 2010 Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, and his wife, Liu Xia, from detention in China.

Entitled “Congratulating imprisoned Chinese democracy advocate Liu Xiaobo on the award of the 2010 Nobel Peace Prize,” H.Res. 1717 was introduced in the House on November 16 with the bipartisan support of 12 members. Lead by Rep. Christopher Smith (R-NJ) and Rep. David Wu (D-OR), the bill passed by a vote of 402 to 1, with 39 co-sponsors.

The resolution congratulates Dr. Liu on the award of the Peace Prize, honoring “the courage with which he has bore repeated imprisonment.” It also recognizes Dr. Liu as a “political prisoner” and Mrs. Liu and Dr. Liu’s detained supporters as “victims of political persecution,” and calls on President Obama to continue working for their release.

Maran Turner, Executive Director of Freedom Now, the organization retained by Mrs. Liu to serve as his international legal counsel, welcomed the resolution. “I am delighted that the U.S. House of Representatives passed this very important resolution calling for the release of Liu Xiaobo, his wife Liu Xia, and his supporters who are in detention in China,” she said. “I hope that President Obama and the U.S. Government will continue to raise their cases at every opportunity.”

Liu Xiaobo, a Chinese citizen and former literature professor, was sentenced on Christmas Day last year to 11 years in prison for co-authoring “Charter 08,” a document that calls for peaceful political reform in China based on the principles of human rights, freedom, and democracy. On October 8, 2010, he received the Nobel Peace Prize in recognition of his “long and non-violent struggle for fundamental human rights in China.” Dr. Liu is now detained in Jinzhou prison in Northeast China; as a result, his chair at the Nobel award ceremony on December 10 will be empty. The government is holding Liu Xia under house arrest in Beijing.

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Our mission is to free prisoners of conscience through focused legal, political and public relations advocacy efforts.

111th CONGRESS
2d Session
H.Res. 1717

Congratulating imprisoned Chinese democracy advocate Liu Xiaobo on the award of the 2010 Nobel Peace Prize.

November 16, 2010

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey (for himself, Mr. WU, Mr. INGLIS, Mr. MCCOTTER, Mr. BILIRAKIS, Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida, Mr. PITTS, Mr. WOLF, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. ROHRABACHER, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, and Mr. TOWNS) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

Congratulating imprisoned Chinese democracy advocate Liu Xiaobo on the award of the 2010 Nobel Peace Prize.

Whereas Liu Xiaobo played a leading role in the 1989 Tiananmen Square demonstration for democratic reform, insisting on peaceful means and democratic process;

Whereas since 1989, Liu Xiaobo has been a leading figure promoting democratic reform and respect for human rights, including by writing hundreds of notable essays on these subjects;

Whereas between June 6, 1989, and October 1999, the Government of China detained Liu Xiaobo 3 times, totaling over 4 years confinement for his role in Tiananmen Square and continued promotion of political reform;

Whereas in 2008, Liu Xiaobo was one of the principal drafters and organizers as well as one of the first signers of Charter 08, a manifesto that proposed democratic reform in China;

Whereas, on December 8, 2008, the Government of China detained Liu Xiaobo for his role in Charter 08, and found him guilty of 'inciting subversion of state power' in 2009 and sentenced him to 11 years imprisonment;

Whereas since December 2008, thousands of Chinese citizens from all walks of life have signed Charter 08, and the Government of China has detained, placed under house arrest, or harassed many of them;

Whereas in 2010, many persons from around the world nominated Liu Xiaobo for the Nobel Peace Prize, including the 14th Dalai Lama, Bishop Desmond Tutu, Vaclav Havel, and 7 members of the United States House of Representatives;

Whereas, on October 8, 2010, the Norwegian Nobel Committee announced its award of the 2010 Nobel Peace Prize to Liu Xiaobo for his 'long and non-violent struggle for fundamental human rights in China';

Whereas the Norwegian Nobel Committee noted that, 'the campaign to establish universal human rights also in China is being waged by many Chinese . . . through the severe punishment

meted out to him, Liu has become the foremost symbol of this wide-ranging struggle for human rights in China';

Whereas when on October 9, 2010, Liu Xia, Liu Xiaobo's wife, notified her husband that he had been awarded the Nobel Peace Prize, he responded by dedicating the prize to 'the Tiananmen martyrs';

Whereas the Government of China responded to the award by placing Liu Xia under house arrest, harassing and detaining Liu Xiaobo's friends and supporters, censoring Internet Web sites and blacking out television broadcasts that reported the award, and defaming Liu Xiaobo by describing him as a 'criminal', a 'political tool of the West', and a 'traitorous operative';

Whereas the Government of China has claimed that its imprisonment of Liu Xiaobo is an internal matter and that the award constitutes meddling in China's internal affairs; and

Whereas President Barack Obama, the recipient of the 2009 Nobel Peace Prize, has congratulated Liu Xiaobo on the award and called on the Government of China to release him from prison: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives--

- (1) congratulates Liu Xiaobo on the award of the 2010 Nobel Peace Prize
- (2) honors Liu Xiaobo's promotion of democratic reform in China, and the courage with which he has bore repeated imprisonment by the Government of China
- (3) states that in honoring Liu Xiaobo, it also honors all those who have promoted democratic reform in China, including all those who participated in the 1989 Tiananmen Square demonstration for democratic reform
- (4) asserts that Liu Xiaobo is a political prisoner, and that Liu Xia, Liu Xiaobo's supporters, and all signers of Charter 08 who have been detained, placed under house arrest, or harassed, are the victims of political persecution
- (5) calls on the Government of China to release Liu Xiaobo from prison, and to release Liu Xia, Liu Xiaobo's supporters, and all signers of Charter 08 from detention, house arrest, and harassment
- (6) calls on the Government of China to cease censoring media and Internet reporting of the award of the Nobel Peace Prize to Liu Xiaobo and to cease its campaign of defamation against Liu Xiaobo
- (7) urges President Barack Obama to continue to work for the release of Liu Xiaobo from prison, as well as the release of Liu Xia, Liu Xiaobo's supporters, and all signers of Charter 08 from detention, house arrest, and harassment; and
- (8) emphasizes that violations of human rights in general, and the persecution of Liu Xiaobo, Liu Xia, Liu Xiaobo's supporters, and all signers of Charter 08 specifically, are matters of legitimate concern to other governments.