

Forced Abortion Whistleblower Gets U.S. Gov't Support

Blind activist Chen Guangcheng, reportedly suffering malnutrition under house arrest for exposing forced abortions in China, may soon find relief.

The House Foreign Affairs Committee unanimously passed Rep. Chris Smith's amendment to the State Department 2012 appropriation bill, which amendment supports Guangcheng and his wife.

"We thank Rep. Chris Smith for his leadership in sponsoring this far-reaching amendment, which urges the Chinese government to stop harassing the Chen family, to release them from house arrest and to arrange for immediate medical treatment," says Reggie Littlejohn, president of Women's Rights Without Frontiers.

"It further urges the Obama administration to arrange diplomatic visits to the Chen family. Beyond this, it highlights the issue of forced abortion and coercive family planning in China."

China Aid and Women's Rights Without Frontiers are spearheading a campaign to free blind activist Guangcheng, whose health is in serious jeopardy because of repeated beatings and malnutrition. Chen exposed the fact that there were 130,000 forced abortions and involuntary sterilizations in Linyi County in 2005.

The Chinese Communist Party imprisoned Guangcheng for four years and three months and has kept him and his family under strict house arrest since September. His health is declining because of malnutrition, intestinal illness, repeated torture and the denial of medical treatment. In a letter recently smuggled out of China, Guangcheng's wife, Yuan Weijing, said

she was worried about his survival. Yuan has also been tortured and denied medical treatment.

“This historic amendment also raises the issue of the harassment, arrest, disappearance and disbarment of Chinese human rights lawyers and defenders,” says Bob Fu, president of China Aid. “We hope to see the Obama administration take effective action on behalf of Chen and other human rights defenders who are suffering incalculable harm as a result of their courage to stand up for human rights in China. This amendment comes just in time, as Chen’s health is frail and deteriorating rapidly. We look forward to the day when Chen Guangcheng, Gao Zhisheng, and other Chinese human rights heroes are free.”

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