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August 11, 2008

His Excellency Zhou Wenzhong
Ambassador of the People's Republic of China
2300 Connecticut Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 2008

Dear Mr. Ambassador:

First allow me congratulate you and your country on a successful beginning of the Olympic Games. Although I was saddened by the actions of the rogue individual who attacked American citizens, I understand this does not represent the spirit of the Chinese people, most of whom have warmly welcomed people from around the world to Beijing.

However, as the Olympics approached, I started to hear of an increased number of arrests and the harassment of certain individuals carried out by official security forces in China. These actions, which appear to go beyond ordinary security precautions, have been reported by mainstream media and from individuals traveling or living in China. Specifically, there is a student at Missouri State University, which is in my district, whose parents have been arrested with what appears to be little justification.

On July 29th, 2008 Xiaoqiang Pang and Cao Junping were arrested by police in Weifang City, Shangdong province. As I understand it, they are currently being held in the Weifang City detention center. Previously, on July 9th these individuals had their home ransacked by security forces, who removed laptops, two desktop computers, and other personal properties, worth an estimated \$7,000. I have been unable to determine what crime these individuals have been charged with, as they have not been allowed to visit or communicate with their family.

Part of the Chinese government's commitment when Beijing was under consideration for the Olympic Games in 2001 was to improve its human rights record. Liu Jingmin, who was the vice-president of the Beijing bid committee, told the media in 2001 that "by allowing Beijing to host the Games you will help the development of human rights."

As you know, I believe that China's relationship with the United States is valuable. I will continue to work on behalf of that relationship with you and your colleagues in the Embassy. In that spirit, I would like to respectfully request that you look into this situation and see if anything can be done to help secure the release of Xiaoqiang Pang and Cao Junping as soon as possible.

Sincerely regards,


Roy Blunt
Republican Whip

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