

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 24

BY FALLON

1 A House Concurrent Resolution expressing opposition
2 to repressive policies of the People's Republic of
3 China toward the people and culture of Tibet and
4 to the persecution of Mr. Ngawang Choephel.

5 WHEREAS, Mr. Ngawang Choephel is a Tibetan national
6 whose family fled Chinese oppression to live in exile
7 in India in 1968; and

8 WHEREAS, Mr. Choephel studied ethnomusicology at
9 Middlebury College in Vermont as a Fulbright Scholar,
10 and at the Tibetan Institute of Performing Arts in
11 Dharamsala, India; and

12 WHEREAS, Mr. Choephel returned to Tibet in July
13 1995, to prepare a documentary film about traditional
14 Tibetan performing arts; and

15 WHEREAS, Mr. Choephel was detained in August 1995,
16 by the government of the People's Republic of China
17 and held incommunicado for over a year before Chinese
18 authorities admitted to holding him, and finally
19 charged him with espionage in October 1996; and

20 WHEREAS, the Chinese government sentenced Mr.
21 Choephel to an 18-year prison term plus four years
22 subsequent deprivation of his political rights on
23 December 26, 1996, following a secret trial; and

24 WHEREAS, there is no evidence that Mr. Choephei's
25 activities in Tibet involved anything other than
26 purely academic research; and

27 WHEREAS, the government of the People's Republic of
28 China denies Tibetans their fundamental human rights,
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1 as reported in the United States State Department's
2 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices, and by
3 human rights organizations, including Amnesty
4 International and Human Rights Watch, Asia; and

5 WHEREAS, the government of the People's Republic of
6 China is responsible for the destruction of much of
7 Tibetan civilization since its invasion of Tibet in
8 1949; and

9 WHEREAS, the arrest of a Tibetan scholar, such as
10 Mr. Choephel, who worked to preserve Tibetan culture,
11 reflects the systematic attempt by the government of
12 the People's Republic of China to repress cultural
13 expression in Tibet; and

14 WHEREAS, the government of the People's Republic of
15 China, through direct and indirect incentives, has
16 established discriminatory development programs which
17 have resulted in an overwhelming flow of Chinese
18 immigrants into Tibet, including those areas
19 incorporated into the Chinese provinces of Sichuan,
20 Ynnan, Gansu, and Qinghai, and have excluded Tibetans
21 from participation in important policy decisions,
22 which further threatens traditional Tibetan life; and

23 WHEREAS, the government of the People's Republic of
24 China withholds meaningful participation in the
25 governance of Tibet from Tibetans and has failed to
26 abide by its own constitutional guarantee of autonomy
27 for Tibetans; and

28 WHEREAS, the Dalai Lama of Tibet has stated his
29 willingness to enter into negotiations with the
30 Chinese authorities and has repeatedly accepted the

1 framework Chinese authorities proposed for such
2 negotiations in 1979; and

3 WHEREAS, the United States government has not
4 developed an effective plan to win support in
5 international fora, such as the United Nations
6 Commission on Human Rights to bring international
7 pressure to bear on the government of the People's
8 Republic of China to improve human rights and to
9 negotiate with the Dalai Lama; and

10 WHEREAS, the Chinese authorities have displayed
11 provocative disregard for American concerns by
12 arresting and sentencing prominent dissidents around
13 the time that senior United States government
14 officials have visited China; and

15 WHEREAS, United States government policy seeks to
16 foster negotiations between the government of the
17 People's Republic of China and the Dalai Lama, and
18 presses China to respect Tibet's unique religious,
19 linguistic, and cultural traditions; NOW THEREFORE,

20 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, THE
21 SENATE CONCURRING, That Mr. Ngawang Choephel and other
22 prisoners of conscience in Tibet, as well as in the
23 People's Republic of China, should be released
24 immediately and unconditionally; and

25 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the United States
26 government is requested to establish a practice
27 requiring that in all official meetings with
28 representatives of the government of the People's
29 Republic of China, United States officials request Mr.
30 Choephel's immediate and unconditional release; and

1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the United States
2 government is requested to take prompt action to
3 sponsor and promote a resolution at the United Nations
4 Commission on Human Rights regarding the People's
5 Republic of China and Tibet which specifically
6 addresses issues of political prisoners and
7 negotiations with the Dalai Lama; and

8 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the United States
9 government is requested to establish an exchange
10 program in honor of Mr. Ngawang Choephel, involving
11 students of the Tibetan Institute of Performing Arts
12 and appropriate educational institutions in the United
13 States; and

14 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the United States
15 government should seek access for internationally
16 recognized human rights groups to monitor human rights
17 in Tibet; and

18 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Chief Clerk of the
19 House of Representatives send a copy of this
20 Resolution to the President of the United States, the
21 United States Secretary of State, and members of
22 Iowa's congressional delegation; and

23 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Chief Clerk of the
24 House of Representatives send a copy of this
25 Resolution to the Chinese Ambassador to the United
26 States.

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