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UNITED STATES SENATE  
NEW JERSEY  
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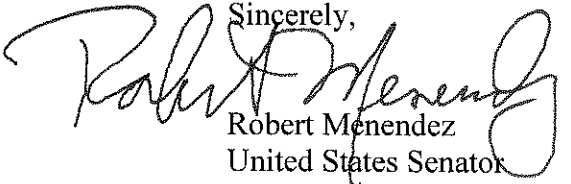
Dear Friends:

I am sorry I could not be with you today as you hold your Prayer Vigil in Hackensack, New Jersey to speak out against the treatment of North Korean Refugees within China and against the forcible repatriation of North Koreans who have fled a repressive regime, seeking protection in China with refugee status.

The "Let My People Go" campaign of the Korean Church Coalition is one of many initiatives that are linking China's poor humanitarian record around the world with the 2008 Beijing Olympics in order to pressure the Chinese Government to make important changes in international and domestic policy. Whether it is in Sudan, Tibet or within China's own borders, the Chinese Government needs to do much more to ensure human rights if they wish to be held in high esteem around the world.

Several months ago, I sent a letter to President Bush with Senators Clinton and Byrd, urging the President to forego attendance at the opening ceremonies of the Olympic Games because of China's recent treatment of Tibetan protesters and its insufficient action regarding the genocide in Darfur. There is great concern that the Olympics is touting China's grand entrance on to the world stage without living up to its obligation to basic human rights.

The outcry against the transgressions is building. We must not let it die down, not when the flame itself goes out this summer at the end of the games, and not until human rights violations come to an end. We must continue to raise our voices to ensure that human rights are accorded to everyone. We must ensure that North Koreans who flee an oppressive government, can safely be resettled in China and elsewhere around the globe, so that they can live in freedom and with the dignity they deserve.

Sincerely,  
  
Robert Menendez  
United States Senator