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THE GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT  
AFRICA AND GLOBAL HEALTH  
VICE CHAIR,  
NEW DEMOCRAT COALITION

July 16, 2008

Mr. Sam Kim  
Executive Director  
Korean Church Coalition for North Korea Freedom  
5661 Beach Blvd. #200  
Buena Park, CA 90621

Dear Mr. Kim:

Thank you for the opportunity to address the Washington state Korean Church Coalition (KCC) conference. I share your organization's concerns about the current regime in North Korea and support the goals of ending the suffering of the North Korean people in North Korea as well as in China and other parts of the world.

The North Korean government's lack of respect for its own citizens' human rights has made the regime one of the world's worst human rights abusers. Its dictator, Kim Jong-Il, has a human rights record that is atrocious and the North Korean people are subjected to a greater degree of hardship and desperation than any other country in the region.

As a member of both the House Foreign Affairs and the House Armed Services Committees, I am working here in Congress to stand with those who suffer from human rights violations around the world. As such, I monitor events in North Korea closely. I believe we should be working to ensure the U.S. remains firm while taking a smart and measured approach to North Korean relations in order to end its infringement on basic human rights.

I am also working to pursue measures outside of North Korea. Recently, I joined several of my colleagues to urge Chinese President Hu Jintao to work with the international community to resolve the issue of North Koreans who have fled to China. The international community is ready and willing to work with China to address the refugee crisis. Yet, China's current policy of repatriation returns North Koreans to North Korea where they face punishment, torture, and in some cases, execution for fleeing.

Throughout my time in Congress, I have been a consistent and strong supporter of Congressional efforts to criticize the Chinese and North Korean governments' records on human rights and have worked with my colleagues to pressure these governments to change their policies.

Clearly there is more work to be done, however. As we continue to work on issues concerning North Korea and the surrounding region, I will continue to stand with Korean-Americans to support improved conditions for North Korean refugees and call attention to their struggle.

Sincerely,



Adam Smith  
Member of Congress