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**“30 Years of the One-Child Policy in China Equals
30 Years of Violence and Gendercide”**
Remarks to the Press
September 24, 2010
Rep. Chris Smith

Tomorrow, September 25, marks 30 years of the Chinese government’s infamous one-child-per-couple policy. On that date in 1980 the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party sent an open letter to party members setting forth its plan to embark on a national one-child policy.

What came out of that letter? A cruel and inhumane policy, a human rights violation that is, in scope and seriousness, the worst human rights abuse in the world today. No other government policy anywhere else in the world systematically punishes, abuses, and violates women so grossly as this.

I’d like to point out four aspects of the policy.

First, strict birth limits and draconian surveillance. The policy limits most urban women to one child – and permits most women in rural areas to have a second child only if the first is female. That is, brothers and sisters are illegal in China. So are children of unwed mothers – they are all killed by compulsory abortion. The policy further requires all women to obtain a birth permit before becoming pregnant, and monitors the reproductive cycles of all women of childbearing age through a system of mandatory, regular, and crudely invasive physical check-ups.

Second, brutal penalties for failing to comply. Women are put under extreme pressure to abort all “out-of-plan” children – this is heightened by an atmosphere of fear, created by paying anonymous pregnancy informants, and by denying birth permits to co-workers and neighbors of women with an “out-of-plan” pregnancy. The brave pregnant woman who refuses to give in is usually detained and beaten – or, if she goes into hiding, her relatives are detained and beaten. Families that succeed in hiding an “out-of-plan” pregnancy are punished with fines up to ten times the average annual income. If they can’t pay, their “out-of-plan” children are denied right to health care, education, and marriage.

Third, “gendercide” of girls. The result of one-child policy in culture with son-preference has been widespread sex-selective abortion of daughters – gendercide. Over 120 boys are born

for every 100 girls. In some provinces 140 boys are born for every 100 girls. Tens of millions of Chinese men will never be able to marry because potential wives don't exist.

Fourth, mass violence. Of course the one-child policy itself is violence against women on an unimaginable scale – over 500 million Chinese women are controlled, threatened, and violated in the most intimate aspect of their lives. Even beyond this, local officials get raises and promotions based on their success in enforcing the policy – they get extra pay for overseeing forced abortions. This ensures extreme harshness and violence in enforcing the one-child policy.

This is the world of the one-child policy, a system of repression that has been traumatizing hundreds of millions of Chinese women for thirty years. It's no wonder – and so sad – that Chinese women have a sky-high suicide rate – over 500 women commit suicide every day in China, and, according to the WHO, China is the only country in the world where more women than men commit suicide, and the female suicide rate is three times the male.

One final comment, before I introduce the other speakers, and then we'll take questions. The violence of the one-child policy is absolutely ongoing. This year there are reliable reports of large scale and violent abortion enforcement campaigns in Guangdong, Fujian, Yunnan, Zhejiang, and Jiangxi provinces. We even have a lot of detail on the April 2010 forced sterilization campaign in Puning county, Guangdong. *The Times* of London reported officials rounded up women and men as well as the relatives of any resisters and holding them in cramped conditions. Working 20 hour shifts for 20 days, they sterilized almost ten thousand people.

So I'd like to appeal to everybody: on this tragic thirtieth anniversary, let's remember what the Chinese people have suffered, and still suffer – especially the women. And let's work and pray to end their suffering. I appeal especially to the Chinese Premier, Wen Jiabao, who is in New York city today: when you go back to China, re-examine the policy and its cruelty.

And I appeal to President Obama to speak out in defense of the Chinese people tomorrow, especially women and children, on this terrible anniversary – what an encouragement that would be for hundreds of millions of Chinese hearts, to suddenly feel that the leader of the free world understands and empathizes with their plight.