

**China Through My Eyes, as an American Expatriate.
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Congressional-Executive Commission on China

China's New "Two-Child Policy" & the Continuation of Massive Crimes Against
Women and Children.

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Honorable Chairman Congressman Smith, Co-Chairman Senator Rubio, Members of the Congressional-Executive Commission on China, and distinguished guests:

I am honored to be here today, and to speak with you about China's new two child policy, to share my perspective and my experience with you.

I moved to China seven years ago. My husband and I were eager to learn the language and get to know the culture. We knew that a one child policy existed, and we knew that boys were considered the more desirable gender in Chinese culture. At first, neither of these things seemed that significant, until we began to really look around us. On the way to school in the morning, on the backs of grandparents' bicycles, we would see two boys for every girl. As children were doing their exercises in the school yards, we noticed the same thing: boys in great number, girls in lesser. We began to ask questions; "Where are all the girls?", "Where are the children with disabilities?", "Do these families WANT more than one child? Or are they satisfied?"

As our language skills increased and as we began to make friends among local families, it all began to make sense. Couples were being pressured in draconian ways to manage their family size with abortions. It was hard to believe, but it was real. Despite it being illegal to tell parents the gender of an unborn baby, "black" abortion clinics are enabling parents to have gender-selective abortions.

As to the question "do they want more than one child?" I asked the question of hundreds of people, old and young, during my time in China, and every single time, the answer was "YES, I wish I could have as many as I want. But I can't."

I would walk down the street with my children, and every day, every single day, one or more people would tell me how "lucky" I was that I had a few children, and bemoan the fact that their government would only let them have one.

We can call it a "one-child policy" or a "two-child policy." We can call it whatever we want. But we cannot deny the reality that it leaves men and women across the country without the reproductive rights the rest of the world thinks of as a basic human right.

As our awareness of this heartbreak in China grew, so did my husband's and my desire to do something about it. It started off just as helping a few friends who were pregnant. We realized quickly that this was not "pro-life" work as we understood it in the west. The common answer that I learned while volunteering in the USA at pregnancy resource centers was "You have options." In China, there were seemingly no options. As we embraced our friends our burden grew. We, along with a small team of local individuals, started a coalition for the purpose of helping pregnant women who wanted to keep their children. As time passed, we learned that there are ways to save babies in China. After starting a variety of creative baby-saving initiatives and enduring great hardships, we partnered with churches and nonprofit groups to form what is now known as China Life Alliance, a coalition of Chinese individuals and groups that rescue thousands of children each year before they are abandoned, sold, or killed. We do this by educating and mobilizing groups to rescue women and save children through our safe house network, legal aid network, coerced-abortion rescue teams, and many other ways.

Over the years, my husband, the CLA team and I have seen unimaginable and horrible human rights violations right before our eyes. This has been the greatest and most difficult cause of our life. However, today I would like to step back and to share with you the personal stories of three of my friends. Each has a unique story. Each of them is dear to my heart. For each of them, the outcome would not have been much different under this new, "two-child policy."

1) First, I want to tell you about my friend and language teacher, Lydia. She translated for me during an ultrasound when I was pregnant. Hospitals do not usually allow women to see their ultrasound images, and despite having a master's degree, Lydia had never seen an image of a baby in the womb. As she watched my child moving around inside me, she was moved to tears by the wonder of it. Lydia had one child and had already had one coerced abortion. A year later, when she became pregnant again, she and her husband ended up on our living room couch sobbing, because they did not want to end the life of their child. She and her husband made many brave and difficult choices, and through the support of other Chinese people they met through the China Life Alliance, came up with solutions to save the life of their unborn child.

2) Next, I'd like to share with you the story of my friend Ivy. Ivy was a single college student when she discovered that she was pregnant by her married professor. The consequences for Ivy, when she chose to give birth to her daughter, and not abort or abandon her, were severe. Ivy was kicked out of college and her daughter was never issued a birth certificate, which meant she could not go to school, be treated at a hospital, or travel. She is one of the most courageous women I have ever met. Because she was a single mother, Ivy could not get a normal, government sanctioned job. She spent her daughter's entire life getting paid "under the table" for the work she did. She did this with virtually no support, other than from a few people in her church. No man would marry her, because under that one child policy, they would not be able to have a child of their own. Now Ivy is one of the women who works in the China Life Alliance Network to help other women who find themselves single and pregnant.

3) Population control like this can put a dramatic pressure on families who have a child born with a disability. My friend and I were involved with Grace, who had a baby girl born with Down syndrome. In their minority people group, they would be allowed to have two children. The pressure of feeling they needed to have both children be “healthy” and preferably male, in order to help earn income for the family, proved to be too much for them. Then Grace’s mother-in-law attempted to smother the infant when she was only 5 days old. Grace called my friend and we went to try to encourage the family, and to help them think through other options. Over and over, we heard both the parents, as well as the grandparents say “it wouldn’t be a big deal if we knew we could just have more kids!” But this one “imperfect” child would count as part of their quota, and the family economics couldn’t figure out how to make that work.

It is hard for me to stay composed when I share these stories. I saw the tears, I felt their fears. I held their hands and I hold their stories in my heart. I want the world to see the reality of the heartbreak population control has brought to the people of this beautiful nation. While we rejoice for the few families who will now be able to have two children instead of one, I believe we must continue to speak up for the rights of the women, men, and children whose lives are so deeply affected by this policy. As we ask what we can do and how we can move forward, let us remember the stories of Lydia, Amy, and Grace. Let us honor their courage and bring about change that gives them hope.