

**Congress of the United States****House of Representatives**

June 5, 2023

CHAIRMAN, CONGRESSIONAL EXECUTIVE
COMMISSION ON CHINACHAIRMAN, GLOBAL HEALTH, GLOBAL
HUMAN RIGHTS, AND INTERNATIONAL
ORGANIZATIONS SUBCOMMITTEECO-CHAIRMAN, TOM LANTOS HUMAN RIGHTS
COMMISSIONSENIOR MEMBER, HOUSE FOREIGN AFFAIRS
COMMITTEEwww.chrissmith.house.gov

The Honorable Daniel Ortega, President
 Republic of Nicaragua
 Via: His Excellency Francisco Obadiah Campbell Hooker
 Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary
 1627 New Hampshire Ave., N.W.
 Washington, D.C. 20009

Dear Mr. President:

As Chairman of the Global Health, Global Human Rights, and International Organizations Subcommittee of the U.S. House of Representatives Foreign Affairs Committee, I am writing to request your assistance in securing a meeting for me with His Excellency Rolando Álvarez Lagos, Bishop of Matagalpa, at the Jorge Navarro Penitentiary Complex, also known as La Modelo.

On March 22, 2023, I co-chaired a congressional hearing which focused on the status of human rights in Nicaragua. Compelling testimony offered by more than one expert witness highlighted Bishop Álvarez's unjust, ongoing imprisonment and persecution. And, Bishop Álvarez's previous confinement and harassment under house arrest was the focus an earlier hearing I chaired on December 15, 2022 at the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission.

I remain gravely concerned about Bishop Álvarez's health and wellbeing. Given the gravity of the reported abuses and credibility of recent testimony, as well as my responsibility for legislation and oversight of the U.S. State Department on matters relating to internationally recognized human rights, it is important that I visit with him.

I request assistance also for Mark Milosch, Republican Staff Director of the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission, who would accompany me.

Sincerely,

CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

Chairman

Global Health, Global Human Rights, and
International Organizations Subcommittee

Co-Chairman of the following: Task Force on Alzheimer's Disease • Bi-Partisan Taskforce for Combating Anti-Semitism • Lyme Disease Caucus
 Coalition for Autism Research and Education • Congressional Pro-Life Caucus • Bosnia Caucus • Poland Caucus • Friends of Ireland Caucus
 Congressional Caucus on Human Trafficking • Vietnam Caucus • Congressional Heart and Stroke Coalition • Fragile X Caucus • Spina Bifida Caucus • Hungarian Caucus
 Malaria and Neglected Tropical Diseases Caucus • Hong Kong Caucus • Congressional Pediatric and Adult Hydrocephalus Caucus