

CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

4TH DISTRICT, NEW JERSEY

CONSTITUENT SERVICE CENTERS:

1540 Kuser Road, Suite A9
Hamilton, NJ 08619-3828
(609) 585-7878
TTY (609) 585-3650

108 Lacey Road, Suite 38A
Whiting, NJ 08759-1331
(732) 350-2300

2373 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515-3004
(202) 225-3765

<http://chrissmith.house.gov>



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

April 27, 2012

COMMITTEES:

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

**AFRICA, GLOBAL HEALTH, AND
HUMAN RIGHTS**

CHAIRMAN

**WESTERN HEMISPHERE
SUBCOMMITTEE**

**COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND
COOPERATION IN EUROPE**

CHAIRMAN

**CONGRESSIONAL-EXECUTIVE
COMMISSION ON CHINA**

CHAIRMAN

DEAN, NEW JERSEY DELEGATION

The Honorable Hillary Rodham Clinton
Secretary of State
The U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street NW
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Secretary Clinton:

The widely reported escape of well-known blind Chinese human rights lawyer Chen Guangcheng from house arrest is being closely followed by the U.S. Congressional-Executive Commission on China. Last November, I chaired an emergency hearing on the “Examination into the Abuse and Extralegal Detention of Legal Advocate Chen Guangcheng and His Family.” I also proposed an amendment to the Foreign Relations Authorization Act, Fiscal Year 2012 (H.R. 2583), that was adopted by the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, calling on the Chinese Government to release Mr. Chen and his family.

Therefore, I was extremely pleased about the recent reports of Chen’s apparent escape and I sincerely hope that Mr. Chen is safe, as his supporters have indicated. At the same time, I remain extremely concerned about the safety and well-being of Mr. Chen’s family members who continue to be held under home confinement, as well as those who have assisted him. The fact that government officials have repeatedly and severely beaten Mr. Chen, his wife, and his mother during his house arrest, in addition to denying him adequate medical treatment and nutrition in spite of his fragile and deteriorating health, gives rise to justifiable reports that his family members and others associated with him are now in danger.

As you are aware Madame Secretary, Mr. Chen has demanded through a video released on the Internet that Premier Wen Jiabao: 1) thoroughly investigate and punish according to the law those who ordered the abusive treatment of Mr. Chen and his family; 2) ensure the safety of Mr. Chen’s wife, mother, and children; and 3) investigate and punish official corruption related to Mr. Chen’s home confinement in Linyi village. I would strongly encourage you to reiterate and express our country’s support for these demands to the Premier. I also respectfully ask that

you take all other available diplomatic measures to ensure the safety and freedom of Mr. Chen and his family.

Finally , I would request that you raise the issue of all harassed, arrested, disappeared, and disbarred human rights lawyers and defenders with the Chinese Government on an on-going basis and link this issue to the United States' interests in the rule of law and respect for human rights generally in China.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Chris Smith". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH