

CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH
4TH DISTRICT, NEW JERSEY



CHAIRMAN, CONGRESSIONAL EXECUTIVE
COMMISSION ON CHINA

CHAIRMAN, GLOBAL HEALTH, GLOBAL
HUMAN RIGHTS, AND INTERNATIONAL
ORGANIZATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE

CO-CHAIRMAN, TOM LANTOS HUMAN RIGHTS
COMMISSION

SENIOR MEMBER, HOUSE FOREIGN AFFAIRS
COMMITTEE

www.chrissmith.house.gov

CONSTITUENT SERVICE CENTERS:

OCEAN

Visit: 33 Washington Street
Toms River, NJ 08754
Mail: PO Box 728
Toms River, NJ 08754
(732) 504-0567

MONMOUTH

1715 Highway 35 North
Suite 303
Middletown, NJ 07748
(732) 780-3035

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

June 5, 2023

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