

Women's Rights and Coercive Implementation - My Pregnancy Story

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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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Greetings Honorable Chairman Congressman Smith, Co-Chairman Senator Rubio, Members of the CECC, and distinguished guests.

Introduction: I am honored to have this opportunity to share my painful story and grateful for this country, which has provided necessary leadership in promoting human rights throughout the world, including working with the international community to persuade countries like China to adhere to international law and universal values on the protection of human dignity.

Since the beginning of this nation, the United States has had a rich history of leading the way in protecting human rights from the Declaration of Independence, which states "that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness."

President Obama has even spoken on the importance of answering the responsibility of "To speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves." Speaking up for others is one of my core values and one of many reasons why my husband and I continually open our hearts and home to the vulnerable and the voiceless.

In America you have a choice, you can choose to speak up for the innocent or to stay silent. In my country, women are told they cannot speak up for their own bodies or for the children in their womb. In China this struggle is not about "pro-life" or "pro choice", but about enduring torture (a forced or coerced abortion) or enduring strict punishment for disobeying. It is because of this that my phones ring constantly by the very few women that are courageous enough to defy the policy to keep their child. Complete strangers frequently call me and say, "I'm pregnant and have no options...I was told you can help me to keep my child." Of course, I try to help them all.

Unfortunately, I am just as busy now with the Chinese government's newly announced two-child policy as I was with the infamous one-child policy.

Although there is an expert here today that will share in more detail, please allow me to share briefly about the statistics. The Chinese government data reports that 13 million abortions are performed each year, for an average rate of 35,000 abortions per day. I personally believe the number is much higher because these statistics only include hospitals that report their figures and most abortions occur in unauthorized "black" clinics or at home. One reason why we think the number of abortions is considerably higher is because China is a shame-based culture. Chinese families do not want the

attention (or tax liability) of going to an official abortion clinic where they are required to register and show their ID. As a result, most Chinese women who receive abortions choose to do it anonymously at unregistered clinics, known as “black clinics”.

In China people often remark that there are more abortion clinics in China than barber shops. Those that work inside China to prevent coercive abortions, such as myself and my colleagues at the China Life Alliance, believe a conservative estimate to be closer to more than 20 million abortions per year based on a variety of factors.

All that to say, even using the most conservative estimates, experts agree that more abortions take place every five years in China than throughout all of American history combined. Statistically, a Chinese mother’s womb is one of the most dangerous places to be for an unborn child, most do not get out alive.

Some may ask, “Why would I risk so much to come here today to testify?”

Since the time my husband and I found out I was pregnant with my second child we have had to work extremely hard to keep my baby alive. Instead of arranging the nursery and having a baby shower, I have been in hiding, wondering and waiting if I will get caught for disobeying direct orders. I have actually been worried that government officials will find me and force my abortion. Because of this reality, I have had to risk fleeing to America in order to protect the baby in my womb. My family and I arrived in America just prior to Thanksgiving, and now I am given this chance to share with you today.

My answer for why I am here being simply because I believe it can make a difference in the lives of the thousands of women like me who are pregnant in China today and are crying out because their babies (and bodies) are not protected by our government or it’s policies. I believe that the people in this room, in this city, and in this country have the courage to stand up for what is right and I believe that you deserve to know the truth.

That being said, I am proud to be Chinese and I love my country, however, I am compelled to speak up and shine a light on the reality of what is happening in China because Chinese lives are important, the protection of women and babies are important.

In my country, China, we have a saying, “a woman’s body is not her own.” In fact, we have been told this all our lives. This way of thinking has penetrated every aspect of our culture and has forced women like me who are pregnant to be required to abort or abandon our babies. Today, I am not just speaking on my own behalf. Over the last few years under the one-child policy I have personally assisted Chinese families with saving and hiding more than 80 babies within my home and in safe houses throughout China.

These are the success stories. For each of those brave mothers that persevered, hid and risked everything to disobey the government’s policy to keep their children, there were others that did not have the courage, or the right circumstances to keep their beloved child in their womb. Chinese mothers, like most around the world, want the choice to keep their child in their womb. In China, they can’t if they do not qualify under the strict

restrictions of the one or two-child policy. Therefore, I am speaking today on behalf of all the mothers in China who deserve the right to control their own womb.

First, I want to briefly share my pregnancy story, and how although I am pregnant with my second child, I am not protected under China's so-called two-child policy.

Next, I will share my experiences and observations of the current situation for all pregnant women in China as it relates to the newly announced two-child policy.

Lastly, I would like to leave you with a challenge.

My Pregnancy Story

My husband and I have wanted a second child for many years. So after finding out we were pregnant we were of course very happy. Especially when we heard that the one child policy had been cancelled, and thought our problems had been solved. We even heard in the news that "everyone in China can now have a second child". Although we were skeptical, our immediate reaction was to rejoice as this would mean a lot more babies born to families that wanted to keep them. We thought all our problems were solved until we heard from my husband's employer (the Chinese government) that the abortion would be necessary and mandatory. Instead of forcing the abortion, he was given threats and a deadline to prove that the abortion had been completed successfully.

It was at this time that we went into hiding. My husband and I's primary goal was to protect my baby's life, then consider our own well-being. After the baby is born we intend on returning to our life as normal and paying the consequences. The fine may cost close to \$36,000 dollars, though we are still in the middle of this process and cannot say for certain what will happen. All we know is that the two-child policy does not apply to our circumstances. We do not meet the unique criteria necessary, for whatever reason.

My experience and observation

My first observation regarding the newly announced two-child policy is that although it is better than the one-child policy, it is a lie that "every couple is allowed to now conceive two babies." It's not the case for me, or other families that are currently in hiding in China. However, the new two-child policy is not completely bad. A majority, but not all, families will meet the criteria and be allowed to keep their second child. However, clearly China's change to a two-child policy is not enough. Chinese families who attempt to have two children could still be subject to coercive and intrusive forms of contraception and forced abortions – which amount to torture.

My second observation is that families in China are required to have permission before they are allowed to get pregnant. If families do not have a birth permit, they are subject to punishment regardless of the one or two-child policy.

In my third observation, I'd like to point out some common myths surrounding this issue.

First, don't believe the Chinese government's press releases on their family planning policies. Several members of the Chinese government have been saying that "forced

abortions do not happen in China.” Not true. I can tell you numerous stories and show you pictures that prove otherwise. In fact, we know of jail cells that are located in rural government offices that exist to hold elderly people hostage until their pregnant relative provides proof of having an abortion. I can take you to these places. China Life Alliance conducted a rescue at one of these locations and has the testimony on video. Although these jail cells were previously under the control of the family planning bureau, they have only recently received a name change, and are under the control of the same officials.

Another common myth is that China’s brutal family planning bureau has been dissolved, thus removing all of its corrupt practices and acts of impunity. Not true. It has simply been renamed. Although I don’t doubt there may be some positive changes, the truth is that the same party members that worked for the family planning bureau are now employed by the national health and family planning bureau, which maintains a strict quota-based system that drives employees to abuse others in order to protect their jobs.

The fourth observation is that if China cares about its people as much as it does about its economy, why did it not abolish birth restrictions completely? The enforcement of coercive birth restrictions doesn’t reflect modern and universally held values, so there must be an anterior motive. Although I do not know the Chinese government’s motivation for its family planning policies, I do know that it comes at the expense of its people.

The fifth observation relates to gendercide, and the cultural preference for boys, which is supported by the government as it encourages family planning control measures. The Chinese government continues to turn a blind eye to the murder of baby girls and refuses to press charges against the perpetrators. Thus, we must ask, will coercive implementation continue? Of course it will. The Chinese government will continue to encourage gendercide and support corporate policies that control population growth within both the public and private sector. A similar phenomenon is occurring in Taiwan, which also has one of the highest abortion rates in the world. Why is this? I believe it relates to a Chinese cultural norm that prefers sons over daughters. Clearly, this pattern is destructive and should be addressed by both the Chinese and Taiwanese government.

My fifth and final observation is regarding “black clinics,” which are unregistered abortion clinics that typically have an illegal ultrasound machine that tell expecting parents the gender of the child. These clinics offer a variety of services from gender identification to late-term abortions with all services offered on an anonymous basis.

Last year, I took an American reporter into one of these clinics, who became sick to her stomach as she witnessed a floor stained in blood, and a back room where forced abortions were performed. Unfortunately, these clinics are very busy and exist in almost every city in China. They are not hard to find. I recently began working with China Life Alliance to map all of these clinics so abortion rescue teams could attempt rescues. Unfortunately, we had to cancel the project because there were way too many to count.

Conclusion and Challenge:

Before I conclude my remarks, I would like to leave you with a challenge.

I do believe that things will change, but how many must suffer before that happens? I hope that many years from now, our children's children will remember us as the generation that did something about this great tragedy. As we are the ones who are aware of what is happening in China, we have an inherent responsibility to act. I will also pray that the day will come where China will no longer coercively control women's wombs.

I believe this could be one of the most tragic events of modern world history. Can you imagine the history books revealing that the Chinese government, through their one and two-child policies having killed more babies and brutalized more women than such events as the plague, or both World Wars combined? These tragedies are happening, and if we don't do something, I ask, who will? If we don't say something, again, who will?

I am convinced that if any other country in the world was committing such terrible crimes against humanity that China is perpetrating, that the world would not endure it. Perhaps even the United States would boldly defend those who are defenseless, especially if these tragedies were occurring in a country with a weaker economy and military power than China. The world remembers the shameful Atlantic Slave Trade, which claimed more than 15 Million lives between the 17th and 19th centuries. Interestingly, it seems absurd that any human would have been silent to the brutal treatment of humans that took place in that era. In a similar way, such brutality is occurring in China today. Millions of women and their baby's each year are being mercilessly told what their fate will be. I imagine in the future people will wonder a similar question, "how was it possible that people knew about this and did not respond?" Clearly, it is time for action.

Perhaps you've heard this famous quote from William Wilberforce, who said, "You may choose to look the other way but you can never say again that you did not know."

To be sure, even after the two-child policy is completely implemented, there will continue to be hundreds, if not thousands of women and families crying out in China each day because they are required to abort their child against their will.

Surely, the international community would agree that no human should be forced to regulate the number of children they can conceive. Thus, if the Chinese government is serious about respecting human rights, and being recognized as a legitimate and trusted government, it should begin by immediately ending all family planning policies and the United States should actively engage the Chinese government on this front.

Thank you.
