



Hearing on
Bringing Home Americans Detained in China
Wednesday, September 18, 2024 – 10:00 a.m.

Statement Submitted for the Record

James P. McGovern
Commissioner, Congressional-Executive Commission on China

My thanks to Chairman Smith and Co-Chairman Merkley for convening today's hearing on the Peoples Republic of China's detention of American nationals.

Unfortunately, I am unable to attend in person, and so submit my remarks for the record.

According to the [Foley Foundation](#), there are 11 U.S. nationals wrongfully detained in China. Others believe there could be as many as 200.

Wrongful detention is a human rights violation.

Even one wrongful detention is too many.

The Biden Administration has demonstrated a clear commitment to obtaining the release of wrongfully detained Americans around the world, with some notable successes.

In March 2023, the Administration brought Paul Rusesabagina home from Rwanda.

In April 2023, Russia released Brittney Griner.

In September 2023, five Americans jailed for years by Iran were finally freed.

In December 2023, ten Americans held by Venezuela came home.

And just a few weeks ago, the Administration achieved the release of 16 individuals, including three U.S. citizens and one green-card holder, who were unjustly detained in Russia.

It was wonderful to welcome home Vladimir Kara-Murza, Alsu Krumasheva, Evan Gershkovich, and Paul Whelan, and to see them reunited with their families.

This is what we want for every wrongfully detained American.

The Administration is making good use of available tools, including those authorized in the [Robert Levinson Hostage Recovery and Hostage-Taking Accountability Act](#), and President Biden's [2022 Executive Order](#) intended to bolster efforts to bring wrongfully detained nationals home.

Roger Carstens, Special Presidential Envoy for Hostage Affairs, has led the delicate diplomacy, often with staunch adversaries of the United States, that has made releases possible.

But there are still many U.S. nationals wrongfully detained around the world, held on dubious charges, and denied due process – like the cases the Commission will hear about today. My heart goes out to the families of Kai Li, Nelson Wells, Jr., and Dawn Hunt, all unjustly detained in China for eight or more years.

Today is the opportunity to hear their stories, and their ideas for what more the U.S. government should be doing to free their loved ones.

I understand that U.S. officials have raised the cases with the Chinese authorities. We also know that, so far, the Chinese government has failed to respond.

I hope this hearing serves to identify additional approaches that could help bring these Americans home.

Thank you.