

**CONGRESSIONAL-EXECUTIVE COMMISSION ON CHINA
2009 ANNUAL REPORT**

DISSENTING VIEWS OF SENATOR SAM BROWNBACK

The CECC's 2009 Annual Report is an exhaustively researched and well-organized document that bears witness in painful detail to the scope of China's abysmal human rights record. Alongside the Commission's establishment of its political prisoner database, this year's report is a testament to the hard work and dedication of the Commission's leadership and staff. I am very grateful for all the time and effort that was put into this report, and extend my thanks in particular to the Commission's staff for its ability to focus on, and articulate, in detail so many crucial human rights issues related to China.

However, as in years past, I am unable to vote for the adoption of the Commission's 2009 Report for the following reasons.

First, I am concerned and disappointed that the report is devoid of any input from the Executive Branch, due to the Obama Administration's failure, after more than nine months, to appoint commissioners to the CECC, as is its responsibility. This reflects what I believe to be a pattern of the Administration's deliberate neglect of the massive, ongoing human rights abuses in China. From Secretary Clinton's public reassurance to the Chinese government that human rights will not "interfere [with] the global economic crisis, the global climate change crisis and the security crisis," to the President's refusal to meet with the Dalai Lama this very week—the first president in almost two decades to deny such a meeting—this Administration has signaled its clear intention to sacrifice human rights in China on the altar of diplomatic quid pro quo.

I intend for my vote against this Report to demonstrate my opposition to a policy that diminishes and devalues the moral leadership of our nation. When we deliberately ignore the suffering of humanity in order to curry favor with abusive governments, we harm ourselves as much as those that are suffering. The United States of America is strongest when defending the weakest; most secure when guarding the oppressed; and most powerful when speaking for the voiceless. For our own sake and for the sake of those subjugated around the world, we must reclaim the mantle of moral leadership that has fallen off our shoulders and into the lap of the world's worst regimes.

There is another reason why I am voting against the report. As with all CECC commissioners, my involvement with the CECC stems from a desire to contribute to improving human rights in China. The statutory creation of the CECC was designed to alleviate concerns from human rights advocates in Congress who felt that granting China permanent normal trade relations would eliminate a regular mechanism for examining China's human rights abuses.

As you know, I have not voted in favor of adopting any CECC Report during my tenure as a commissioner.

At first, this was due to deficiencies in the report itself. In my dissenting statement in the first annual report of 2002, I noted the Report's lack of focus on forced sterilizations and forced abortions. Since then, the Commission has included robust sections on these topics in its annual reports. As the years have passed, the Commission has also moved to address other key issues, including human trafficking and the treatment and status of North Korean refugees. I commend the Commission for devoting significant discussion in the 2009 Report to the very serious increase in Chinese Internet censorship, a matter of grave consequence for civil society within China.

However, despite the fact that the report itself has grown in substance and stature—an achievement worthy of high accolade—my metric of success has been, and will remain, the human rights situation on the ground in China. Reflecting on the past seven years, I am unable to see the tangible impact of our efforts; indeed, in many ways, the situation in China has worsened since the granting of PNTR and the formation of the CECC, with respect to freedom of conscience, religion, speech, assembly, and press, as well as to censorship and brutality. Recognizing that this standard may exceed the goals and abilities of the Commission, I nonetheless feel obliged to apply it. In doing so, I must vote against the adoption of the report, albeit with my sincere thanks to the Chairmen and the staff for producing this monumental and impressive document.