

CONGRESSIONAL-EXECUTIVE COMMISSION ON CHINA

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20515

Donald A. Manzullo (IL-16) **Opening Statement**

Mr. Chairman, thank you for calling this important hearing on the impact of the Beijing Olympics on human rights, the rule of law, and media freedom. I am delighted to be a part of the Congressional-Executive Commission and this first hearing. I believe that it is our duty as Members of Congress to do all we can to urge all nations to respect fundamental human rights and to protect life in all its forms. We must give voice to the voiceless and not shy from confronting oppression.

The People's Republic of China will for the first time in its history host the Olympic Games, which is one of the most prestigious events in the world. Undoubtedly for the Chinese, the Games symbolize much more than athletic prowess; it is after all a golden opportunity for China to demonstrate to the world its emergence as a global power. And for the rest of the world, the Games represent an important occasion to urge China to continue making progress in its reforms.

Unfortunately, some of China's actions both domestically and on the international arena have led me to believe that they are counterproductive to its stated goal of becoming a more responsible player in the international community. On a range of issues ranging from human rights abuses and Internet censorship to arms sales in Darfur and forced abortion, China has proved to be less than the responsible stakeholder it claims to be. Even on the environment, China's rapid development has left an unmistakable imprint of pollution and harm. Part of the problem for China is its immense size and influence; everything it does has a global impact.

Mr. Chairman, I welcome this Commission's inquiry into China's human rights record and respect for the rule of law. I originally supported permanent normalized trade relations for China because I believe it would help speed reforms and liberalization. Eight years after the passage of PNTR, China's progress on human rights, religious prosecution, forced abortion, and censorship remains mixed. I am disappointed by this lack of progress; however, I still believe proactive engagement is the best path to take to encourage more progress.

Thank you for holding this hearing. I look forward to the testimonies.