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UNITED STATES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES



EDWARD R. ROYCE

Fortieth District-California

April 9, 2010

Suzanne Scholte
Chairman, North Korea Freedom Coalition
3014 Castle Road
Falls Church, VA 22044

Dear Friends:

It gives me great pleasure to offer my support and best wishes to you as you host North Korean Freedom week. This year's forum deserves particular attention, as it is being held in South Korea for the first time.

Since 2004, North Korean Freedom Week has shown a spotlight on the egregious human rights abuses that continue to be wrought on the people of North Korea. What have we seen? A total denial of political, civil, and religious liberties; No dissent or criticism of Kim Jong-il is allowed, with the media tightly controlled by the regime; severe physical abuse is meted out to citizens who violate laws and restrictions; NGO's describe a system of concentration camps akin to the Soviet gulag system, housing an estimated 150,000 to 200,000 inmates. The abuses are the most extreme in the world.

As you know, we face a tremendous humanitarian challenge on the Korean Peninsula. It is one, I am afraid, that the international community has been far too relaxed about. Events like North Korean Freedom Week bring deserved attention to this important issue. It is vital that we continue to speak out against these injustices, and I promise to continue to do so in Congress.

Again, I offer my congratulations to you on holding another successful North Korean Freedom Week. I applaud your dedication to this cause.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ed Royce".

EDWARD R. ROYCE

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