

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-1401

September 20, 2010

Mr. David B. Raymer  
2520 Kossuth Street  
Lafayette, IN 47904-3243

Dear Mr. Raymer:

Thank you for contacting me regarding religious freedom in China and the detention of Rongye Adak. I appreciate this opportunity to respond and thank you for your continued support.

Religious freedom and human rights must constitute a very high priority for the U.S. government as it deals with foreign nations and groups worldwide. As a nation that was founded on the principles of personal rights and liberties, we must champion a respect for human rights. I strongly support the United States' efforts to address problems of religious persecution around the world, and I appreciate your concern that our government should remain vigilant in the protection of this most vital human freedom.

The Department of State compiles annual reports on religious freedom worldwide. These reports are used by U.S. policy makers to assess foreign countries' progress in the areas of human rights and religious freedoms and to highlight areas where improvements can be advocated. In its latest report for China, the State Department noted: "During the reporting period, the level of religious repression in the TAR and other Tibetan areas remained high, especially around major religious holidays and sensitive anniversaries. Government control over religious practice and the day-to-day management of monasteries and other religious institutions continued to be extraordinarily tight due to continued fallout from the March 2008 outbreak of widespread unrest in Tibetan regions." The report also said: "No new information available on Rongye Adak, who was arrested on August 1, 2008, in Ganzi, TAP after calling for the Dalai Lama's return. He was convicted of inciting separatism and sentenced to eight years in prison." You may wish to read this full report at <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/irf/2009/127268.htm>.

I have been deeply troubled by China's human and religious rights record for some time, and have communicated my concerns directly to the Chinese government on a number of occasions. In an article that appeared in the *Washington Times*, I wrote that: "Above all, we cannot remain silent about the latest round of human rights abuses because our attention has been diverted or because we fear our commercial contacts will be jeopardized. . . . We must tell the leadership in Beijing that cooperation between our countries will proceed faster and farther if there is progress on human rights. We should leave no doubt where the United States stands on the principle that has been so

central to the American political culture and so important to the conduct of American foreign policy; our reverence for human rights and the rule of law, and our eagerness to cooperate with those countries that share our ideals.”

I will continue to monitor this issue. Thank you, again, for contacting me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dick Lugar". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Richard G. Lugar  
United States Senator

RGL/klc