

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
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AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

For the better part of two decades, China's communist regime has been engaged in the vile practice of forcibly removing human organs for transplant. In June 2019, the independent China Tribunal announced its finding that China's regime had for decades practiced systematic forced organ removal from prisoners of conscience; it is believed that organs have been harvested from hundreds of thousands of incarcerated people, mainly Falun Gong practitioners, but possibly also Tibetan Buddhists, House Church Christians, and members of the Uyghur Muslim ethnic minority.

China has welcomed an influx of "transplant tourism," whereby individuals critically in need of transplants pay thousands of dollars for one of 60,000 to 90,000 transplant surgeries conducted each year; the number of transplants far exceeds the number of voluntary organ donations in the country; moreover, Chinese hospitals are able to schedule transplants of major organs within two weeks, suggesting nefarious foreknowledge regarding the "donation" of these organs. By contrast, America's highly developed organ donation system requires that recipients be placed on a carefully curated list to await the transplant of an organ; the timing of these transplants is not predictable, as an organ may not be available for hundreds of days, or in time for a specific patient.

Falun Gong, a spiritual practice centered on the values of truthfulness, compassion, and tolerance, became immensely popular in the 1990s. In July 1999, the Chinese Communist Party launched an intensive, nationwide persecution designed to eradicate the spiritual practice; Freedom House reported in 2015 that Falun Gong practitioners are the primary victims of forced organ removal and face an elevated risk of dying or being killed in custody.

On July 20, 2020, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo denounced 21 years of persecution of Falun Gong by China's communist regime, declaring in a press statement: "We call on the PRC government to immediately end its depraved abuse and mistreatment of Falun Gong practitioners, release those imprisoned due to their beliefs, [. . .] and address the whereabouts of missing practitioners. Twenty-one years of persecution of Falun Gong practitioners is far too long, and it must end."

United Nations Special Rapporteurs have called on the Chinese government to account for the sources of organs used in transplant practices, and the World Medical Association, the American Society of Transplantation, and the Transplantation Society have all called for sanctions on Chinese medical authorities. Resolutions condemning organ harvesting from prisoners of conscience have been adopted by the parliaments of Canada and the European Union, as well as by the Foreign Affairs Committee of the United States House of Representatives, and it is important to join the international outcry against this major violation of human rights.

RESOLVED

That the 87th Legislature of the State of Texas hereby strongly condemn China's practice of involuntary organ harvesting.

That the 87th Legislature of the State of Texas encourage the medical community to educate Texans about the risks of travel to China for organ transplants to help prevent Texas residents

from unwittingly becoming involved in murder in the form of forced organ harvesting from prisoners of conscience.

That the 87th Legislature of the State of Texas respectfully urge the United States Congress and the president of the United States to pass laws and adopt measures prohibiting collaboration between United States medical and pharmaceutical companies and any Chinese counterparts linked with forced organ harvesting, banning entry into the United States of those who have participated in unethical removal of human tissues and organs, and providing for the prosecution of such individuals.