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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-0920

June 6, 2016

PLEASE RESPOND TO:

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The Honorable Paul Ryan
Speaker
U.S. House of Representative
H-232, the Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
House Majority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
H-107, the Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Speaker Ryan and Majority Leader McCarthy:

I write regarding H.Res.752, *Condemning the Dog Meat Festival in Yulin, China, and urging China to end the dog meat trade*, which I introduced with bipartisan support on May 25, 2016.

The Dog Meat Festival in Yulin, Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, China dates back to 2009-2010, when it was launched by dog meat traders as a commercial enterprise to boost flagging sales of dog meat. More than 10,000 dogs are reported to be captured, transported and slaughtered every year for this Dog Meat festival, with more than 10 million dogs killed annually in China for the dog meat trade. Animal welfare groups have found that a number of these dogs are stolen pets taken from their homes, still wearing their collars when they reach the slaughterhouse. Many dogs die during transport to the slaughterhouses after days or weeks without food or water, and others suffer illness and injury during transport, such as broken bones. These dogs suffer mentally from watching other dogs being disemboweled and blow-torched in front of them.

Yulin's dog slaughter takes place in residential areas and public marketplaces, imposing scenes of extreme animal cruelty on local residents, including young children who may, as a result, suffer psychological trauma and desensitization. The capture, transport, and butchering of dogs and the consumption of dog meat poses a risk to human health by exposing people to a multitude of diseases, including rabies and cholera. This practice, in my opinion, is completely unacceptable, and can be stopped by the diligent efforts of members of the Chinese government. Although the Yulin city government withdrew as a sponsor of the Dog Meat Festival, it has taken no meaningful action to enforce China's existing laws and regulations on animal disease control, food safety, trans-provincial dog transport, or youth protection, all of which are breached by the dog meat trade.

Tens of millions of people around the world have called upon the Government of China, the Governor of the Guangxi Autonomous Region, and the Mayor of Yulin to officially end the Dog Meat Festival and stop the mass slaughter of dogs all year round in Yulin. In addition, the majority of people in China do not consume dog meat and dog meat is not a part of mainstream Chinese culinary practice. Millions of Chinese citizens recently voted in support of a legislative proposal by Zhen Xiaohe, a deputy to the National People's Congress of China, to ban the dog meat trade. Alongside these voices, I have already written a letter to the Chairman of the National People's Congress Standing Committee urging him to draft legislation to prohibit this festival from taking place ever again. I respect the traditions of the Chinese people, but these events and activities tarnish China's reputation across the world.

Given that this year's Dog Meat Festival will begin on June 21, 2016, I urge that H.Res.752 be immediately considered on the House floor. I thank you for your time and consideration of my request, and stand ready to do all that I can to assist with bringing this critically important resolution to the floor.

Sincerely,



Alcee L. Hastings
Member of Congress

Cc:

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi, Democratic Leader, U.S. House of Representatives
The Honorable Steny Hoyer, Democratic Whip, U.S. House of Representatives
The Honorable Jim Clyburn, Assistant Democratic Leader, U.S. House of Representatives
The Honorable Ed Royce, Chairman, U.S. House Committee on Foreign Affairs
The Honorable Eliot Engel, Ranking Member, U.S. House Committee on Foreign Affairs