

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

May 2, 2017

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:

We write regarding H.Res.30, *Condemning the Dog Meat Festival in Yulin, China, and urging China to end the dog meat trade*, which was introduced with broad bipartisan support on January 6, 2017. To date, 154 of our colleagues in the House of Representatives have co-sponsored the resolution. We respectfully ask that you bring this resolution to the floor for a vote before June 21, 2017, the date of the Yulin Dog Meat Festival.

Given that the Yulin Dog Meat Festival is fast approaching, we believe that it is critically important for this measure to be considered without delay.

With the monumental step taken by Taiwan's legislature to ban the dog and cat meat trade and consumption of such meat, the United States' position on the Yulin Dog Meat Festival should be clear and unequivocal: dogs should not be killed for the consumption of their meat. Bringing H.Res.30 to the floor for a vote would send a strong message to China, South Korea, Vietnam, and other Asian countries where the dog meat trade is still legal.

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. Up to 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 significant 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.

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 our 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, or trans-provincial dog transport, 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 Xiaohu, a deputy to the National People's Congress of China, to ban the dog meat trade.

We are standing with the millions of people across the globe and in China who wish to see this horrific festival come to an end, and once again sincerely hope that this measure will be brought to the floor before June 21, 2017. Thank you for your time and consideration of our request. We look forward to following up with both of you in person to discuss, and stand ready to do all that we can to assist.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Alcee L. Hastings".

Alcee L. Hastings
Member of Congress

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Vern Buchanan".

Vern Buchanan
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