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CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES
April 10, 2006

The President
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President,

As you prepare to receive Chinese President Hu Jintao at the White House on April 20, I respectfully request that you ask him for the release of Jude Shao, an American businessman imprisoned in China for eight years under questionable circumstances. Mr. Shao has now served approximately half of his sentence, and should be eligible for parole on or about May 8, 2006. In Chinese criminal law and practice, precedent exists for a prisoner to be paroled for good behavior after he or she has served half of the relevant sentence.

Mr. Shao is a naturalized U.S. citizen who graduated from the Stanford Business School. He founded China Business Ventures to export U.S. medical equipment to China. After a dispute with his local partners in China, Mr. Shao was arrested in 1998 on charges of tax evasion, and was tried and sentenced in 2000 to 16 years imprisonment. The circumstances of his original trial were questionable, and Chinese courts have declined to accept subsequently discovered exculpatory evidence. Mr. Shao believes in the values of his adopted American homeland: democracy, ethical business conduct, and the rule of law. He believes that Chinese officials have handled his case improperly under Chinese law.

In April 2003, six prominent Chinese legal experts at the Center for Research in Criminal Legal Science at the People's University in Beijing reviewed Mr. Shao's case, concluding that he deserved a retrial. Nonetheless, the Supreme People's Court has denied him such, and his legal options under Chinese law are now exhausted.

Mr. Shao apparently suffers from a heart condition that prison doctors cannot treat properly. His family petitioned for medical parole in June 2004 with support from the U.S. Embassy in Beijing, but Chinese authorities have not responded formally. Informally, Chinese officials say that Mr. Shao will not be eligible for medical parole.

Please ask President Hu Jintao to make it possible for Jude Shao to be released from prison and return to the United States.

Thank you for considering this request.

Respectfully,

James A. Leach
Member of Congress

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