

BILL CASSIDY, M.D.
LOUISIANA

WASHINGTON, DC OFFICE:
SUITE SH-703
HART SENATE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20510
(202) 224-5824

United States Senate

February 9, 2016

COMMITTEES:
APPROPRIATIONS
ENERGY AND NATURAL
RESOURCES
HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR,
AND PENSIONS
VETERANS' AFFAIRS
JOINT ECONOMIC COMMITTEE

President Barack Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

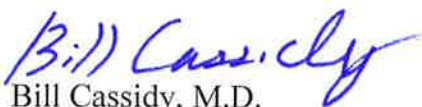
Dear President Obama:

As you prepare to host the ASEAN Summit in California, I urge you to take advantage of this unique opportunity to address Asian-Pacific human rights violations. I would specifically ask that you raise concern with Vietnamese Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung regarding his country's pattern of internationally recognized human rights violations – including the ongoing violations of religious freedom and the detention of prisoners of conscience such as Bui Thi Minh Hang.

Bui Thi Minh Hang has been detained since February 2014 following an arbitrary arrest. She is 51 years old and is recognized for her peaceful activities to elevate the freedom of information, support independent religious groups, and speak out for people whose lands have been wrongfully expropriated by the Vietnamese government. Her health has severely deteriorated due to the harsh prison treatment.

While the upcoming summit reflects the United States' larger initiative to rebalance attention with Asia, human rights objectives should not be sidelined from other policy agendas. At a time when Vietnam vigorously seeks to expand trade and security relationships with the U.S., we have an opportunity to insist that Vietnam renew its commitment to internationally recognized human rights practices. Releasing prisoners of conscience such as Bui Thi Minh Hang immediately and unconditionally is a step forward to that renewed commitment.

Sincerely,



Bill Cassidy, M.D.
U.S. Senator

3600 JACKSON STREET
SUITE 115A
ALEXANDRIA, LA 71301
(318) 448-7176

5555 HILTON AVENUE
SUITE 100
BATON ROUGE, LA 70808
(225) 929-7711

101 LA RUE FRANCE
SUITE 505
LAFAYETTE, LA 70508
(337) 261-1400

1 LAKESHORE DRIVE
SUITE 1155
LAKE CHARLES, LA 70629
(337) 261-1400

3421 N. CAUSEWAY BOULEVARD
SUITE 204
METAIRIE, LA 70002
(504) 838-0130

1651 LOUISVILLE AVENUE
SUITE 123
MONROE, LA 70201
(318) 324-2111

6425 YOUREE DRIVE
SUITE 415
SHREVEPORT, LA 71105
(318) 798-3215