

COMMITTEE ON
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Congress of the United States
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Floor Statement

Rep. Anh "Joseph" Cao

Congratulating Fr. Ly on his release from prison in Vietnam

Wednesday, March 17, 2010

Mister Speaker-

I rise today to thank the State Department for finally securing the release of Fr. Nguyen van Ly.

I have advocated and pushed hard for Fr. Ly's release in the past year, and I am glad that my hard work has come to fruition.

Fr. Ly is one of the many Vietnamese citizen who have been harassed for religious and democracy advocacy. He was placed on trial without defense and was imprisoned for almost 17 years for promoting human rights and religious freedom.

As a Roman Catholic priest and prominent Vietnamese resident, Fr. Ly has become a powerful icon in the on-going fight for democracy in Vietnam. He is a hero for many Vietnamese world-wide. While the release of Fr. Ly is a good start, we still have a long way to go.

We as a country must uphold our values and must continue to challenge countries like Vietnam and China on their human rights and religion freedom violations. One day, maybe, my dream then will come true, a free and democratic Vietnam.

Thank you.