

County of Shenandoah

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OFFICE OF COUNTY ADMINISTRATION

EVAN L. VASS
COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

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DEPUTY COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

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Shenandoah Board of Supervisors

RESOLUTION

TO EDUCATE SHENANDOAH'S RESIDENTS AND MEDICAL COMMUNITY ON THE RISKS OF TRAVELING TO CHINA FOR ORGAN TRANSPLANT IN LIGHT OF RECENT REPORTS OF STATE-SPONSORED ORGAN HARVESTING FROM PRISONERS OF CONSCIENCE.

WHEREAS, extensive and credible reports have revealed mass killing of prisoners of conscience in the People's Republic of China, primarily practitioners of the Chinese spiritual practice of Falun Gong, but also other religious and ethnic minority groups, in order to obtain organs for transplants; and

WHEREAS, The China Tribunal, an independent tribunal sitting in London chaired by Sir Geoffrey Nice QC, who was a prosecutor at the international criminal tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, concluded on Jun 18, 2019, in a unanimous determination at the end of its year long hearings, that the killing of detainees in China for organ transplants is continuing and victims include imprisoned followers of the Falun Gong movement; and

WHEREAS, the 2017 Freedom House report, "The Battle for China's Spirit", states that "available evidence suggests that forced extraction of organs from Falun Gong detainees for sale in transplant operations has occurred on a large scale and may be continuing;" and

WHEREAS, an investigative report published in June 2016 by human rights attorney David Matas, former Canadian Secretary of State for Asia-Pacific, David Kilgour, and journalist Ethan Gutmann, estimated that China is performing transplants at a rate amounting to "an industrial-scale, state-directed organ transplantation system, controlled through national policies and funding, and implicating both the military and civilian healthcare systems", as Kilgour described these practices in his speech to the European Parliament in 2016; and

WHEREAS, Falun Gong, a spiritual practice involving meditative "qigong" exercises and centered on the values of truthfulness, compassion, and forbearance, became immensely popular in China in the late 1990s with multiple estimates placing the number of practitioners at upwards of seventy million (70,000,000); and

WHEREAS, in July 1999, the Chinese Communist Party launched an intensive, nationwide persecution designed to eradicate the spiritual practice of Falun Gong. Hundreds of thousands of Falun Gong practitioners have been detained illegally in Chinese reeducation-through-labor camps, detention centers, and prisons, where physical and mental torture is common.


WHEREAS, in June 2016, the United States House of Representatives unanimously passed House Resolution 343, condemning the systemic, state-sanctioned organ harvesting from practitioners of Falun Gong and other prisoners of conscience; and

WHEREAS, there has been little media coverage of this problem yet dozens of Shenandoah residents expressed concern to Shenandoah Board of Supervisors, and

WHEREAS, Shenandoah residents should be fully informed of the organ source in China before they make the decision to engage in organ tourism in China and Shenandoah Board of Supervisors should assist in raising awareness in this regard;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY the Shenandoah Board of Supervisors, that the Residents and medical community servicing Shenandoah and the immediate region be informed about the risks of travel to China for organ transplants to help prevent our local citizens from unwittingly becoming accomplices in state-sponsored forced organ harvesting from prisoners of conscience; and will provide copies of this resolution to the Governor of Virginia and the Virginia Department of Health.

Approved on a Motion and a Second by Supervisors MORRIS and POLLACK
and by a vote of 5-0 on January 12, 2021.


Steve Baker, Chairman
Board of Supervisors

ATTEST: 
Evan L. Vass, Clerk of the Board