

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

December 18, 2008

His Excellency Aliaksandr Lukashenka
President of Belarus
c/o Mr. Oleg Kravchenko
Chargé d'Affaires
Embassy of Belarus
1619 New Hampshire Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20009

Dear President Lukashenka:

As Chairman and Ranking Member of the Europe Subcommittee, in the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, and on behalf of our colleagues in the U.S. House of Representatives, we are writing to you today to express our grave concern regarding the health and well-being of Emanuel Zeltser, a U.S. citizen imprisoned in Belarus. Given Mr. Zeltser's deteriorating medical condition, we strongly urge you and your government to immediately release Mr. Zeltser on humanitarian grounds.

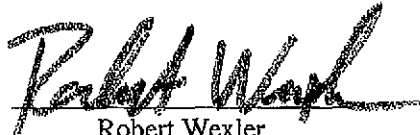
We are deeply troubled by Mr. Zeltser's arrest as well as the inhumane treatment he has received while in your government's custody since March 12, 2008. It is our understanding that during Mr. Zeltser's internment in Belarus he has been denied regular independent medical evaluation and the U.S. consul in Minsk has reported that he has been physically assaulted and abused while in detention. This abuse is unconscionable and has been reported by Amnesty International, which has urged authorities in Belarus not to subject Mr. Zeltser to "further torture and other ill-treatment."

This unacceptable treatment has exacerbated and worsened Mr. Zeltser's chronic health problems. Mr. Zeltser suffers from Type 2 Diabetes, heart disease, gout, severe arthritis, and most recently has developed dangerously high blood pressure. These are potentially life-threatening conditions if not properly treated with correct prescription medication and consistent medical attention. Mr. Zeltser has been denied his prescribed medications and he has been denied access to an independent doctor to monitor his health condition and oversee the administration of medications. On the single occasion that Mr. Zeltser's American doctor was able to see him the doctor reported that Mr. Zeltser might not survive his detention in Belarus.

As you know, the U.S. Department of State has also directly expressed "deep concerns about the state of his health," and has repeatedly called for Mr. Zeltser's release on humanitarian grounds, as has Representative Alcee L. Hastings, Chairman of the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe. We share their concerns and strongly urge your government to immediately and unconditionally release Mr. Zeltser in light of these serious health concerns.

President Lukashenka, time is of the essence, and we urge you and your government to observe international human rights standards and laws and release Mr. Zeltser on humanitarian grounds without further delay.

Sincerely,



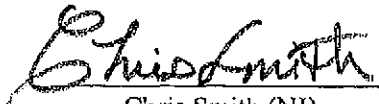
Robert Wexler
Chairman
Subcommittee on Europe



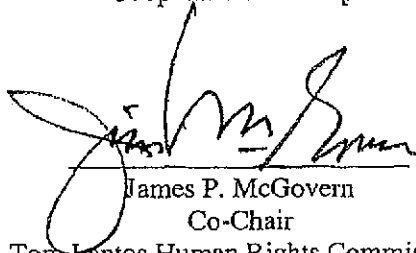
Elton Gallegly
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Europe



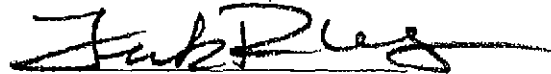
Alcee L. Hastings
Chairman
Commission on Security and
Cooperation in Europe



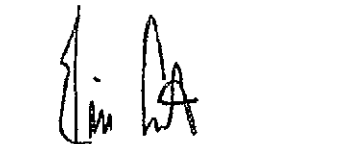
Chris Smith (NJ)
Ranking Member
Commission on Security and
Cooperation in Europe



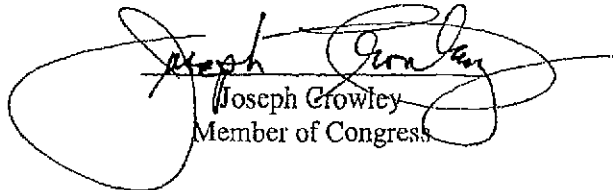
James P. McGovern
Co-Chair
Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission



Frank R. Wolf
Co-Chair
Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission



Jim Costa
Member of Congress



Joseph Crowley
Member of Congress