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Ambassador Zappia,

We write to express our deep concern for the safety of Li Ying, an art student and prominent dissident currently residing in Italy. We encourage the Italian government and local authorities to take immediate action to ensure his safety and we stand ready to support your country in protecting against potential violations of Italian sovereignty by the Chinese Communist Party.

Li Ying, a talented painter based near Milan, first emerged as a significant figure during the White Paper protests of late 2022, which arose from widespread discontent over the PRC's stringent pandemic policies. Separated from his family for three years, Li transformed his Twitter account into a vital source of uncensored information, sharing real-time updates, images, and videos from individuals in the PRC. His platform has quickly grown to 1.7 million followers, providing a lifeline for those seeking to voice their dissent.

As Li's influence expanded, he became a target of severe harassment. He has received death threats and faced coordinated smear campaigns aimed at discrediting him. His PRC financial accounts have been frozen, and his parents have been placed under extreme scrutiny. Ministry of State Security officials have visited his parents' home in Fuyang City, pressuring his family for information about his whereabouts, threatening to block their pensions unless he ceases his online activities and returns to the PRC, and installing surveillance cameras outside their house. These tactics are unacceptable.

Li has also reported unsettling incidents while in Italy that heighten his sense of danger. His personal information, including his address in Italy and images of his passport, has been leaked online, forcing him to change locations frequently. For example, after ordering painting supplies from the PRC, PRC public security officials visited the art supplier to obtain shipping details related to him. Then, on December 12, 2022, he was approached in Italy by a man claiming to be a mailman who asked him for his address. A few months later in March 2023, an individual went to the house in Italy where he used to live, obtained his contact information, and asked to meet him. In May 2023, an acquaintance in Milan told him that local PRC churches were inquiring about his whereabouts. On September 13, 2024, an individual rang his doorbell and asked him if he was Chinese. On October 4, 2024, another individual appeared in front of his apartment and pointed to the door of his apartment and talked to another individual man in a white hat. On October 9, 2024, two unidentified individuals scrawled graffiti on the front door of his

home, writing “stupra” (rape). Finally, he has heard from sources that there is a police force from the PRC in Italy looking for him.

These actions are consistent with the tactics—called transnational repression—employed by the Chinese Communist Party against dissidents globally, including in the United States. The strategy can involve using stalking, harassment, hacking, physical assaults, attempts to forcibly return individuals to their home countries, and threats to family members to pressure dissidents into silence.

These actions represent a clear violation of the sovereignty of every country in which they are employed and pose a grave threat to the human rights and personal freedoms both our countries so greatly value. Together, we must ensure that free countries remain a haven for the persecuted, rather than a target for authoritarian regimes.

In this spirit, and with grave concern for the safety of Li, we ask you to take quick and decisive steps to protect Li Ying and work with the United States to ensure transnational repression is not tolerated in either of our societies. Thank you for your partnership with the United States, and we look forward to engaging with you on this important matter.

Sincerely,



John Moolenaar
Chairman
House Select Committee on the CCP



Representative Raja Krishnamoorthi
Ranking Member
House Select Committee on the CCP