

December 21, 2017

President Donald J. Trump  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Trump:

You have regularly expressed concern about and shown support for Americans who are being unfairly held hostage overseas. I write today to ask you, in the spirit of the holiday season, to consider an appeal to Iran to free Xiyue Wang, a Princeton University graduate student jailed there while conducting academic research.

Iranian authorities sentenced Mr. Wang to ten years in prison for espionage that he did not attempt or commit. He has already been separated from his wife and young child for more than a year and a half.

[Mr. Wang, a fifth-year graduate student](#) in Princeton's Department of History and a naturalized U.S. citizen since 2009, was detained and confined to Evin Prison in Tehran while in Iran solely for the purpose of studying Farsi and doing historical scholarly research in connection with his dissertation. Before traveling, he described his research plans to Iranian authorities and the libraries and archives he planned to visit, and he only sought materials that he needed for his research.

ACE and 32 other higher education organizations [issued a statement](#) earlier this year urging that he be safely released and allowed to return home to reunite with his wife and young son and to complete his degree. It noted that, "Mr. Wang's imprisonment can only have a chilling effect on historical research and scholarly exchange in Iran and throughout the world, and this, in turn, can only lead to diminished understanding and greater mistrust, to the detriment of all."

ACE and the entire higher education community greatly appreciate your attention to Mr. Wang's case and any additional efforts you can make on his behalf. Please let me know if there is anything further we can do to assist in this matter.

Sincerely,



Ted Mitchell, President