



Washington is renaming the street outside China's embassy after jailed dissident Liu Xiaobo — and China is furious

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China has reacted with fury to plans to rename the street outside its Washington embassy in honour of its most famous political dissident.

Earlier this week, a U.S. congressional committee voted to change the Chinese embassy's address to "Liu Xiaobo Plaza" — a tribute to the literary critic and dissident who has been in prison since 2009 for organizing a "subversive" pro-democracy petition called Charter 08.

The name change was "a way to highlight Liu's unjust imprisonment," said a statement posted on the website of Frank Wolf, the Republican congressman behind the initiative.

The move enraged China. "We believe that the U.S. people will not like to see a U.S. street be named after a criminal," a spokesman for the Chinese embassy was quoted as saying by the *Washington Post*.

Friends, relations and supporters of Mr. Liu celebrated the initiative, which was timed to coincide with this month's 25th anniversary of the 1989 Tiananmen Square protests, in which he played a central role. Xia Yeliang, a Chinese academic, said Liu Xia, the dissident's wife who herself has been under house arrest since 2010, had shown enthusiasm after he told her of the vote by telephone.

"She immediately laughed, a very loud laugh, a joyful laugh," Prof. Xia said.

He added that he had asked her to pass the message on to Liu Xiaobo, but that the telephone line had gone dead. Liu Xiaobo was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in absentia in 2010, and Prof Xia said he saw it as a tribute to all of those who protested and lost their lives in 1989.