

## Human Rights

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Congresswoman Sanchez is privileged to represent the largest Vietnamese community outside of Vietnam itself. For this reason, she remains committed to urging the Vietnamese government to improve human and political rights for all citizens.

### Nobel Prize Nominees

Congresswoman Sanchez, a tireless advocate for human rights, continues to lead the House of Representatives in calling for religious freedom and social justice in the Socialist Republic of Vietnam. On December 4, 2001, the Congresswoman circulated a letter encouraging members of Congress to join her in nominating two revered Vietnamese spiritual leaders--the Most Venerable Thich Quang Do and Father Nguyen Van Ly-- for the Nobel Peace Prize. Citing their courage, sacrifices, and beliefs in the sanctity of religious freedom, Congresswoman Sanchez is proud to advocate international recognition of these spiritual leaders who valiantly challenge the communist Vietnamese government to institute religious freedom.

### Legislative Work for Human Rights in Vietnam

In 2001, Congresswoman Sanchez led the fight against waiving the Jackson-Vanik Restrictions for Vietnam. These restrictions require free-emigration compliance in order to restore certain economic trade benefits with the United States. Despite a close vote to hold Vietnam accountable for these violations, the House ultimately approved the waiver in the interest of increased trade with the nation. As a result, the Congresswoman intensified her efforts to win House approval for the Vietnam Human Rights Act. While recognizing that the United States should promote economic relations with Vietnam, she maintains that we must first address human rights violations, religious persecution and social injustice facing many Vietnamese citizens. She was instrumental in assuring that the Vietnam Human Rights Act was overwhelmingly approved by the House.

Congresswoman Sanchez also urged her colleagues not to approve the Vietnam-U.S. Bilateral Trade Agreement. She maintains that a trade agreement is unwarranted until Vietnam moves toward a more market-oriented economy and demonstrates progress in addressing human rights violations. Many of the Congresswoman's concerns regarding economic restrictions, corruption, religious persecution, and human rights violations are a direct result of her visit to Vietnam in the fall of 2000.