



U.S.-CHINA ECONOMIC AND SECURITY
REVIEW COMMISSION

Hearing on *Access to Information and Media Control in the People's Republic of China*

**Opening Statement of Chairman Larry Wortzel
June 18, 2008
Washington, DC**

Good morning. Welcome to today's hearing on "Access to Information and Media Control in the People's Republic of China." This is the sixth of nine public hearings that the Commission will hold this year pursuant to its statutory responsibilities.

My name is Larry Wortzel, and I am the Chairman of the U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission for the 2008 reporting year. Alongside Commissioner Jeffrey Fiedler, I am one of the co-chairs of today's hearing. As we begin today, I would like to extend a special note of thanks to Chairman Akaka and the other members and staff of the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee for providing us with the use of their hearing room for today's proceedings.

Congress has given our Commission the statutory responsibility to examine the potential effects that restrictions on information in China could have on relations between China and the United States, with a particular eye towards the ways in which such restrictions could impact economic and security policy. Recent events have dramatically shown how restricted access to information affects such issues as public health, product safety, information on goods and services, and the impact of nationalist fervor in China on diplomatic relations.

To explore many of these issues we are joined today by a number of esteemed representatives of academia and non-governmental organizations. We hope that this will help to illuminate the public debate on these issues, and to assist the Commission in providing a clearer picture of these issues to both Congress and the American public.

Now, I'd like to turn the floor over to my colleague and co-chair, Mr. Jeffrey Fiedler, for his comments.