

DEREK T. TRAN
45TH DISTRICT, CALIFORNIA

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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-0545

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January 9, 2025

Ambassador Nguyễn Quốc Dũng
Ambassador of Vietnam to the United States
Embassy of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam
1233 20th St NW, Suite 400
Washington, DC 20036

Dear Ambassador Dũng:

I am seeking the immediate release of Lê Hữu Minh Tuấn from prison as well as a comprehensive update on the state of his health. As you know, Mr. Tuấn is an independent media journalist known for his writings on social justice, government accountability, and human rights issues in Vietnam.

While the United States and Vietnam are committed to strengthening and enhancing their Comprehensive Strategic Partnership, significant concerns regarding human rights persist. We respectfully urge the Vietnamese government to demonstrate its commitment to improving its relationship with the United States by taking the crucial step of releasing individuals who have been wrongfully arrested and imprisoned. This week marks the fifth anniversary of Mr. Tuấn's arrest, and in light of the significant passage of time and the humanitarian consequences at stake, we request his release without further delay. Doing so would reflect Vietnam's stated commitments to human rights and the rule of law.

Mr. Tuấn wrote and published critical writings on the Vietnamese government's policies and human rights violations, for which he was arrested on June 5th, 2020, under Article 117 of Vietnam's Criminal Code, which criminalizes "anti-state propaganda." The Vietnamese government accused Mr. Tuấn of using social media to spread anti-government views and subsequently sentenced him to 11 years in prison.¹

Since his incarceration, Mr. Tuấn has suffered severe health problems, and his physical condition has continued to deteriorate. Following a diagnosis of ulcerative colitis, Mr. Tuấn has reportedly suffered a cascade of ailments including bloody stool, hepatitis, and chronic hemorrhoids causing severe bleeding. Beyond the administration of basic antibiotics, no efforts have been made to treat

¹ *Writers at Risk*, Pen America <https://pen.org/writer-at-risk/le-huu-minh-tuan/>

Mr. Tuân, exacerbating his already failing health.² Given his dire state of health, I further request the earliest opportunity practicable to meet with Mr. Tuan directly to personally check on his well-being and ensure his medical needs are being properly addressed.

I urge that Mr. Tuân be released immediately and that the Vietnamese government take accountability for its mistreatment of Mr. Tuân. I will be exercising every available tool as a Member of Congress to ensure the safe return of Mr. Tuân to his family. I look forward to your prompt and comprehensive response to my request for his wellbeing and his imminent release.

Sincerely,



Derek T. Tran
Member of Congress

cc: The Honorable Marco Rubio, Secretary of State

² Lê Hữu Minh Tuân: A Journalist Suffering Behind Bars, The Vietnamese
<https://www.thevietnamese.org/2025/06/le-huu-minh-tuan-a-journalist-suffering-behind-bars/>