



INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR TIBET

Remembering Dianne Feinstein

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The International Campaign for Tibet is mourning the loss of Senator Dianne Feinstein, a longtime friend of Tibet and His Holiness the Dalai Lama who played a leading role in passing some of the most important Tibet legislation in US history and working toward a negotiated resolution of China's decades-long occupation of Tibet.

ICT President Tencho Gyatso said: *“Senator Feinstein is one of the important figures in American politics who made a great impact for the Tibetan people. The senator, as well as her husband Richard Blum, were strong supporters of the work of the International Campaign for Tibet. Her legacy will live on through her incredible works as a senator, mayor, citizen, leader and friend. We at the International Campaign for Tibet offer our prayers and heartfelt condolences to the family of Senator Feinstein.”*

In [“My Personal Words of Gratitude”](#) from 2014, late ICT Executive Chairman Lodi Gyari, who had a close relationship with Feinstein and her family, wrote: *“Senator Dianne Feinstein and her husband, Richard Blum deserve special mention. They were relentless in this endeavor and even made special trips to China carrying personal communications from His Holiness the Dalai Lama to President Jiang Zemin.”*

In his book, [“The Dalai Lama’s Special Envoy: Memoirs of a Lifetime in Pursuit of a Reunited Tibet,”](#) published last year, Gyari added: *“Senator Feinstein and Richard Blum’s interest was very specific. They were doing it for their friend the Dalai Lama, whom they deeply love and respect, and for the Tibetan people, whose suffering they had come to embrace. Their persistent efforts, in fact, played a major role in [Chinese] President Jiang [Zemin]’s decision to start informal discussions with us.”*

Tibetan Policy Act

Feinstein was the main Democratic sponsor in the Senate of the [Tibetan Policy Act](#), a groundbreaking law that marks its 21st anniversary tomorrow, Sept. 30. Last year, on the [20th anniversary of the act becoming law](#), Feinstein provided a [video message](#) for a celebration at the International Campaign for Tibet.

“I was very proud to champion the bill in the Senate, because Tibet holds a special place in my heart and was a passion for my late husband, Dick Blum ...” Feinstein said in the video. “I’m often reminded of the message of His Holiness the Dalai Lama that peace and compassion should guide us all. It’s a powerful message if you think about it, and the world needs to hear it now.”

The Tibetan Policy Act codified US political and programmatic support for Tibet. The law made the US’ central objective on Tibet promoting dialogue between the Chinese government and the Dalai Lama’s envoys; codified the position of Special Coordinator for Tibetan Issues in the State Department; and addressed a wide range of other issues facing the Tibetan people.

Congressional Gold Medal

Feinstein was also the main Democratic sponsor in the Senate of the [Fourteenth Dalai Lama Congressional Gold Medal Act](#), which led to the [Tibetan leader receiving the Gold Medal](#), the US' highest civilian honor, in the US Capitol Rotunda on Oct. 17, 2007.

Feinstein joined then-President George W. Bush, current Speaker Emerita Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., current Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell, R- Ky., other Congressional leaders and the Dalai Lama's fellow Nobel Peace Laureate Elie Wiesel at the Gold Medal ceremony.

"This world is filled with conflict and strife. But the Dalai Lama transcends this world and inspires us with hope," Feinstein said during the ceremony. "To know him is to know compassion. To listen to him is to learn wisdom. To be close to him is to feel the presence of something very special. This man has been a quiet force for peace and compassion. He moves people to look beyond their narrow, selfish interests and to find the strength to help others. I have been blessed to call the Dalai Lama a friend for nearly 30 years."

Longtime support

Feinstein was introduced to the Dalai Lama by her [late husband, Richard Blum](#), in 1978, the same year she became the first female mayor of San Francisco.

As mayor, in September 1979, Feinstein became the first official to invite and welcome His Holiness to San Francisco to present him with a key to the city during his first visit to the United States.

She continued to support the Dalai Lama and the Tibetan people throughout her political career.

Just last year, Feinstein [met with several Tibetan Americans and Tibet supporters from California](#) during ICT's Tibet Lobby Day.



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