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**Tibetan Association of Boston
The 58th Anniversary of the Tibetan Uprising
March 10, 2017**

Washington, DC – Today, Rep. James P. McGovern, Co-Chair of the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission in the U.S. House of Representatives and a leading congressional advocate of human rights around the world, issued the following statement to mark the 58th anniversary of the Tibetan National Uprising.

“On Friday, March 10th, Tibetans around the world will mark the fifty-eighth anniversary of the Tibetan National Uprising against Chinese rule. On that day in 1959, thousands of Tibetans, fearing for the safety of His Holiness Tenzin Gyatso, the 14th Dalai Lama, defied Chinese forces and surrounded the Potala Palace in Lhasa to offer him protection, transforming a simmering rebellion into full-scale revolt that lasted through 1962. The Dalai Lama, along with thousands of his followers, fled over the Himalayas to Dharamsala, India, where he continues to be based to this day. His Holiness has never been permitted to return to his country, nor have the injustices that prompted the rebellion — derived from China’s interference with the fundamental rights of the Tibetan people to their identity and autonomy — ever been resolved.

“This year the Dalai Lama will celebrate his 82nd birthday, while Chinese authorities led by President Xi Jinping deepen repressive policies against Tibetan Buddhists and other communities of faith in China. Most recently, we have witnessed the deeply disturbing images of demolitions at Larung Gar, the world’s largest center for the study of Tibetan Buddhism, and the expulsion of nuns and monks from their homes.

“Today, as we celebrate the resilience of the Tibetan people, I call on China’s leaders to embrace a different approach to Tibet. President Xi Jinping should allow the Dalai Lama to travel back to Tibet. The Chinese government should re-start a serious, constructive dialogue on Tibetan autonomy with His Holiness or his duly designated representatives. And Chinese authorities at every level should end their efforts to undermine Tibetan language, religion and culture, and allow the Tibetan people to move freely within and outside of China. Taking these steps would greatly benefit Tibet and all of Chinese society, as well as China on the world stage. The alternative, continuing down the current path, will forever undermine Chinese aspirations to global leadership.”