



Office of the Lord Mayor

Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake

1593 Four Mile Creek Road, P.O. Box 100, Virgil, ON L0S 1T0

905-468-3266 • gary.zalepa@notl.com

A Message from Lord Mayor Zalepa - Support for Canada's Efforts to Secure Mr. Jimmy Lai's Release

For Immediate Release

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As the Lord Mayor of Niagara-on-the-Lake, I believe one of my responsibilities is to uphold fairness and compassion within our community. In support of this belief, I recently wrote a letter to the Honourable Minister Anita Anand at the House of Commons advocating for the release of Mr. Jimmy Lai, a local resident who is currently imprisoned in Hong Kong under the National Security Law. I want to take a moment to explain why I felt it was important to do so, and what this action represents.

First and foremost, my decision was grounded in the belief that every person deserves fair treatment under the law. Advocacy is about ensuring that justice is applied evenly and that our system remains rooted in integrity and humanity. In this spirit, I am proud to advocate for someone who has spent his life championing those very ideals. Mr. Lai is internationally recognized as a global leader in advancing democracy and freedom of the press. His unwavering commitment to truth and justice, and his courage in defending them, have earned him deep respect across the world.

In Niagara-on-the-Lake, Mr. Lai and his family have made a lasting contribution to our community. Through their establishment of Vintage Inns, they have strengthened the local economy, created meaningful employment opportunities, and revitalized key heritage properties that attract visitors and sustain local businesses. Their family vision and commitment to high-quality development have set a standard for responsible investment and support for our local tourism economy.

I believe our community is strongest when we balance accountability with compassion. I support the efforts of the Government of Canada and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to press for his release and to uphold the principles of human rights, justice, and freedom that Canada has long championed both nationally and internationally.

Sincerely,

Lord Mayor
Gary Zalepa