

St. Louis, MO—Today, Congressman Todd Akin (R-MO), applauded the [announcement](#) by Missouri Attorney General Chris Koster that he has negotiated the display of a [disclosure statement](#) by Premier Exhibitions for its proposed exhibit of plastinated human remains at a Missouri shopping mall this October.

In June, Congressman Akin had asked the Attorney General to seek a disclosure statement to inform the public of the dubious origin of bodies to be exhibited by Premier Exhibitions Incorporated. The controversial origin of such remains has been addressed by the former Chinese political prisoner Harry Wu and his organization the Laogai Research Foundation. The foundation recently released a report, *Bodies on Display: The Risks in Trading in Human Remains in China*, which outlines evidence of the trade in the remains of former Chinese political prisoners for use in some plastination displays.

"The people of Missouri deserve to know the truth, and this disclaimer is a good first step," said Harry Wu, a former Chinese political prisoner and head of the Laogai Research Foundation. "But the fact remains that Premier's bodies come from the Chinese Bureau of Police."

"They are not computers, not automobiles or even animals, they are human beings," said Wu. "We do not know who they were, or if they wanted to be on display for our entertainment."

Congressman Akin who is a member of the House Science Committee, has introduced a bill designed to address concerns that the bodies of executed Chinese prisoners may be used in some plastinated displays of human remains. H.R. 5524 would amend the Tariff Act of 1930 to prohibit the importation into the United States the plastinated human remains from the People's Republic of China. Akin had filed a similar bill in 2008, when various media accounts indicated a likelihood that some such displays may have included bodies that were obtained by executed prisoners from China.

The re-filing of a bill banning the import of plastinated remains was inspired by the proposed exhibition of plastinated remains in Congressman Akin's District by Premier Exhibitions, Inc. at a retail mall this October. In a letter to the owners of the St. Louis Galleria, which is scheduled to host the exhibit, Akin outlined ethical and human rights concerns regarding the source of the bodies used by Premier Exhibitions.

The letter notes that the prominent Saint Louis Science Center (SLSC) had declined to display the exhibit due to its inability to verify consent by the deceased. The letter stated, "It is our understanding that the Saint Louis Science Center declined to host this exhibition due to ethical concerns. I consider this to be very significant given that the SLSC does not object to the display of plastinated human remains in principle if there can be a verifiable guarantee of informed consent of the deceased. Not only does this decision not to host the display speak well of the ethical standards of SLSC, it is very troubling that such an informed decision by an established science museum is not being echoed by your retail establishment."

"The seriousness of the potential violation of human rights is underscored by a 2008 disclaimer for the New York City display that read, "This exhibit displays full body cadavers as well as human body parts, organs, fetuses and embryos that come from cadavers of Chinese citizens

or residents. With respect to the human parts, organs, fetuses and embryos you are viewing, Premier relies solely on the representation of its Chinese partners and cannot independently verify that they do not belong to persons executed while incarcerated in Chinese prisons.”

Commenting on today’s announcement Akin stated that, “Missouri’s Attorney General has rendered a valuable service to the public by highlighting the lack of consent by the deceased to have their bodies plastinated or displayed.”

“We should be working to prevent political oppression in China, not rewarding it financially,” concluded Akin.