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UNITED STATES CONGRESSWOMAN

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McCOLLUM**

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# McCollum, Huizenga Establish First Ever Congressional Burma Caucus

February 1, 2024 • [Press Release](#)

Today, Congresswoman Betty McCollum (DFL-MN) and Congressman Bill Huizenga (R-MI) announced the establishment of the first ever Congressional Caucus on Burma. This caucus was created to bolster congressional support for the Burmese people in their fight for democracy and human rights against the brutal military junta. The humanitarian crisis in Burma has risen to a level that urgently needs attention from congressional leaders.

February 1, 2024 marks the three-year anniversary since the military junta's coup d'etat that took control of Burma's Union Government and has led to thousands dead, tens of thousands detained, and millions of people displaced. The caucus will address and advocate for issues directly impacting Burma, the Burmese people, and Burmese Communities in Southwest Michigan, Saint Paul and the East Metro, and across the United States.

"I am so pleased to join my colleague, Congressman Bill Huizenga, as Co-Chair of the Congressional Burma Caucus," **said Congresswoman Betty McCollum.** "Since the end of World War II, the people of Myanmar (formerly known as Burma) have endured escalating humanitarian crises resulting from its ongoing civil war. Civilians are being displaced from their homes because fighting is worsening between the military junta and the opposition. Minnesota's Fourth District is home to approximately 17,000 Burmese and Karen refugees, and hundreds of thousands of others call the United States home as well. My father served in the China Burma India Theater during World War II, so I have a personal connection in working to promote peace and improve civil society for the people of Myanmar."

"I am honored to launch the first ever bipartisan Congressional Burma Caucus with my colleague Betty McCollum," **said Congressman Bill Huizenga.** "Launching this caucus on this third anniversary was intended to act as a tremendous show of support for the bravery and determination of the Burmese people in their struggle against the military junta. This caucus will serve as an important conduit for Burmese Communities across the United States and look for ways to support human rights and democratic representation for the People of Burma."

“People from Burma (Myanmar) in the United States have been deeply concerned with the situation back home since the military coup. We thank Rep. McCollum for taking leadership in the Congressional Burma Caucus, and we look forward to working with them in any way possible to promote sincere democratic governance in Burma and to build resettlement opportunities for refugees and Internally Displaced Persons.” – **Eh Tah Khu, Co-Executive Director, Karen Organization of Minnesota**

“On behalf of the Burma Center, we would like to express our sincere gratitude and acknowledgment to Congressman Huizenga's leadership in establishing the Burma Caucus. His commitment to addressing the crucial issues and challenges facing Burma is greatly appreciated. His efforts in this role will make a meaningful difference in promoting democracy, human rights, and peace. We are excited to work with him in our effort to raise awareness and advocate for a better future for the people of Burma. Thank you, Congressman!” – **Tha T. Par, Executive Director of Burma Center of Battle Creek, MI**

“On behalf of the Burmese community in the Battle Creek area, I would like to express our heartfelt gratitude to the congressman for dedicating his valuable time to the cause of Burma despite his demanding schedule. This underscores his genuine concern for his constituents and his unwavering commitment to restoring democracy in Burma by striving to eliminate the military dictatorship prevailing there. Once again, we extend our profound appreciation to our Congressman.” – **Dr. Than Oo, Board Chair, Burma Center of Battle Creek, MI**

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