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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Utah State Capitol Event to Honor Victims of Chairman Mao**  
Utah H.B. 116 Designates November 7 as “Victims of Communism Day”

**Salt Lake City (DATE OF RELEASE)-** Lisa Fifield, a Chinese teacher in Davis County, today announced she will host an event on November 7 from 6:30-8:30 p.m. at the Utah State Capitol Rotunda to honor the 65 million people who were killed by Chairman Mao Zedong’s Chinese Communist regime. Attendees may expect musical performances in both English and Chinese, exhibits displaying period film and photographs by Li Zhen Sheng, a photographer during the Cultural Revolution who hid his negatives in floorboards and waited until he could come to America and show the truth about what happened. His story, and other witness stories, as well as historical facts will be shared. Speeches will be given by Utah K-12 students on their appreciation for their 1<sup>st</sup> Amendment rights. Utah Representative Kay Christofferson of Lehi, Representative Candace Pierucci of Herriman, and Babur Ilchi, an ethnic Uyghur will also speak.

In 2019, the Utah House passed H.B. 116, which designated November 7 “Victims of Communism Commemorative Day.” Lisa Fifield has organized the “Victims of Mao” event to commemorate those who were killed under Mao’s Communist regime from 1949-1976. “As Mao said, “Communism is not love. Communism is a hammer we use to crush the enemy.” This is the first time there has been an event for the victims. Forty-six years after Mao’s death, I think an event like this is long overdue. If not here in Utah, then where?”

Mao’s actions suggest his own people were the enemy. “The unfathomable number of people who died under Chairman Mao during peacetime is an important part of history that is not often taught in classrooms in Utah and is not well-known in either China or the United States. We all know about the Holocaust, and Hitler. I’ve personally traveled to Dachau and Auschwitz, but there’s no memorial built for the Chinese people and Mao killed more people than both Stalin and Hitler combined. How have we overlooked the people of China, again? Is this a systemic thing? I think so. Sadly, many people in Utah still think Mao Ze Dong is a place,” said Lisa Fifield of Davis County.

“The victims were denied proper burials according to the teachings of Confucius. For many, that was their only dying wish. They didn’t just die. They were tortured, publicly shamed and humiliated, sent to forced labor camps to die, eaten through cannibalism, died of starvation, publicly executed, and committed suicide. The only person who got their dying wish was Mao. His body is still enshrined in a glass tomb like Snow White at Tiananmen. Do we just keep living and forget the past, or do we remember and learn from it? I think history has so many lessons to teach the living.”

“Although we in Utah boast that one-third of our students are learning Mandarin, these students are taught nothing about the true history of Communism and not by their Chinese teachers. We see students writing letters to President Xi! I think that we had better have those important conversations since our students will likely be future leaders who will either stand for or against human rights and the free world as we’ve known it.”

“In a time where the Chinese Communist Party is consolidating power, it is important to shed light on the realities of life under Communism. It is out of a deep respect and love for the Chinese people and compassion for their suffering, the suffering of the Tibetan people, and the suffering of the people in Hong Kong that we must remember the past. History serves as a warning to the rest of us. These stories must be heard, and the victims remembered. If not now, when? After all, Ronald Reagan once said, "If we lose freedom here, there is no place to escape to. This is the last stand on earth." Please come to the Utah State Capitol Building on November 7th from 6:30-8:30 pm in the Rotunda and join with us as we remember them."

### **About Lisa Fifield**

Lisa is a native of Idaho. She was China’s first American ballerina and danced with the Guangzhou Ballet Company in China. She has taught Chinese in Davis County for fourteen years. She is not affiliated with any specific program or organization. She has personally planned and created this event because of her own experiences living and working under Communism and teaching Chinese in Utah. She has a deep love and respect for the Chinese people and culture.