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The Pennsylvania State University
University Park, PA 16802

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The Honorable John Heinz,
United States Senator
United States Senate
Washington, D.C.

Dear Senator Heinz:

As students of The Pennsylvania State University, we write to you to express our concern over the disappearance of Penn State Math Professor Boris Weisfeiler. Professor Weisfeiler, a Soviet-Jewish immigrant and U.S. citizen, disappeared on January 4, 1985, while backpacking in southern Chile. Though the Chilean government still maintains that Weisfeiler drowned, we find their explanations unsatisfactory. We believe that Boris Weisfeiler may still be alive and held prisoner in Chile for the following reasons:

1. Weisfeiler's body was never found, despite an extensive search by police units, army patrols, and navy squadrons.

2. It is unlikely that Weisfeiler tried to cross the Nuble river alone — as the Chilean government contends — since a cable-car crossing is located near the spot Weisfeiler allegedly drowned. (Moreover, Weisfeiler had crossed the river earlier on January 4th — with some difficulty — while on horseback.)

3. Weisfeiler disappeared approximately ten miles from Colonia Dignidad, a secretive German community established in the early 1960s. The "colony" is accused in a 1976 United Nations report of having been a torture center for political prisoners. In addition, Simon Weisenthal has stated that Colonia Dignidad has been a haven for several Nazi war criminals, including Josef Mengele. It is therefore not unreasonable to suggest that Weisfeiler, a Soviet Jew, may have been taken hostage at Colonia Dignidad.

The other pertinent details of Professor Weisfeiler's disappearance are in the enclosed Washington Post articles and the United Nations report. We hope that you will read these accounts to familiarize yourself with this case.

We also hope that you will seriously consider the request of the 3,740 persons who have signed the enclosed petition. Professor Weisfeiler's disappearance demands the full attention of our elected officials and we ask you to take whatever steps are necessary to procure information about Dr. Weisfeiler's whereabouts.

We thank you for attending to this matter, and we look forward to hearing from you very soon.

Chile Project (#S199900030)

U.S. Department of State

Release Excise _____ Deny _____

Declassify: In Part _____ In Full _____

Exemption(s) _____

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Yours respectfully,

Bob Masino

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cc: Dr. Bryce Jordan, Senator Arlen Specter,
Senator Christopher Dodd, Representative William Clinger

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