

Robert R. King

Ambassador Robert R. King served in the Administration of President Barak Obama as Special Envoy for North Korean Human Rights Issues with Rank of Ambassador at the Department of State (2009-2017). The position was created by Congress to “coordinate and promote efforts to improve respect for the fundamental human rights of the people of North Korea.” Since leaving the Department he is Senior Advisor to the Korea Chair at the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), a Board Member of the Committee for Human Rights in North Korea (HRNK), a Senior Fellow at the Korea Economic Institute (KEI), and in September-October 2017 he was Visiting Fellow at the East-West Center in Honolulu, Hawaii.

For 25 years (1983-2008), King served as Chief of Staff to Congressman Tom Lantos (D-California). When Lantos became Ranking Minority Member and then Chair of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, King served as Lantos’ Committee Staff Director (2001-2008). Before working for the Congress, King was a White House Fellow where he served on the National Security Council staff in the Jimmy Carter White House (1977-1978).

Previously he was Senior Analyst and Assistant Director of Research at Radio Free Europe (1970-1977) in Munich, Germany. In addition to his full-time jobs King has taught courses in U.S. foreign policy and international relations at the University of Southern California German Study Program, Brigham Young University Study Abroad Program, American University in Washington, D.C., and New England College in New Hampshire. He is author of five books and over forty articles on international relations topics.

King received a Ph.D. from the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, Tufts University. He is married to Kay Atkinson King, who served as Director of the Office of Inter-Parliamentary Affairs for Speaker Nancy Pelosi (2007-2010) and was Chief of Staff to Congressman Richard Swett of New Hampshire (1991-1995) in addition to other Congressional staff positions.

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