

March 2, 2023

The Honorable Antony J. Blinken  
Secretary of State  
2201 C Street NW  
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Mr. Secretary:

The American Historical Association expresses grave concern for Marc Fogel, a US citizen and history teacher currently imprisoned in Russia. We urge you to designate him as “wrongfully detained” under the Robert Levinson Hostage Recovery and Hostage-Taking Accountability Act.

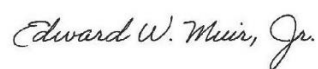
Mr. Fogel is a respected educator who has taught history around the world for the last 35 years. He returned to Russia for the school year after a US physician prescribed medical marijuana for his chronic pain. For bringing in prescribed medication, Mr. Fogel was sentenced to 14 years in a maximum-security penal colony. A typical sentence in Russia for such a violation is five years of probation.

This sentence is out of proportion to his legal violation and appears politically motivated. Mr. Fogel has already spent a year in detention. At age 61 and with his chronic medical conditions, Mr. Fogel’s health will likely deteriorate in a penal colony.

The American Historical Association is the largest organization of professional historians in the world, with over 11,000 members spanning the globe. On behalf of this international network of scholars, we respectfully urge the reclassification of Mr. Fogel and the respect of his civil and legal rights. We ask for immediate attention to this matter to ensure Mr. Fogel’s health and well-being.

We appreciate your attention to this urgent matter and look forward to your reply.

Sincerely,



Edward Muir  
President



James Grossman  
Executive Director

cc: Roger D. Carstens, Special Presidential Envoy for Hostage Affairs  
Karen Donfried, Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs