

Chen asks Ma to let daughter go to US: DPP lawmaker

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Former president Chen Shui-bian has written a letter to President Ma Ying-jeou asking him to allow his daughter, Chen Hsing-yu, to leave to register for studies in the US, a legislator said yesterday.

The move came after Chen Hsing-yu broke down in front of her father while visiting the former president last week.

Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) Legislator Tsai Huang-liang, who visited the former president at the Taipei Detention Center yesterday, relayed the former president's message to Ma in his "119 letter."

In the letter, "[Chen Shui-bian] believes that barring his daughter from leaving the country is illegal and unreasonable, and the Ministry of Justice should lift the ban," Tsai said.

The former president wrote: "If Chen Hsing-yu cannot go to the US, she might not be emotionally capable of dealing [with the situation]," Tsai said.

He added that Chen Shui-bian was worried his daughter might develop a mental disorder or try to commit suicide because of the travel restrictions.

When Chen Hsing-yu visited her father in the detention center on Friday, she reportedly cried to her father about not being able to go to the US as planned.

The former president asked Tsai to go to the Ministry of Justice to plead with Minister Wang Ching-feng to let Chen Hsing-yu go to the US on July 1 to register for school, as she has plans of leaving with her children to study and work in the US.

In response, the ministry said in a statement that it would handle the matter in accordance with the law.

Prosecutors placed travel restrictions on Chen Hsing-yu on June 6, three days after she was charged with giving false testimony during investigations into the former first family for corruption and money laundering.

She was then barred from leaving the country on June 23, after she, her husband Chao Chien-ming and her brother Chen Chih-chung admitted to the false testimony charges.

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