

U.S. Honors Belarussian

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U.S. officials have given a human rights award to an imprisoned Belarussian activist, honoring his work and that of others struggling for democracy.

The U.S. ambassador to Poland, Lee Feinstein, presented the State Department's 2011 Human Rights Defenders Award on Tuesday to the wife of Ales Belyatsky, who is in prison in Belarus.

Belyatsky was convicted of tax evasion last November and sentenced to four years in prison, an act that U.S. and European officials have described as a punishment for his democracy struggle.

Feinstein said the award is meant to let Belyatsky know he has Washington's support, and it also "helps the regime to know that we are paying attention."

(AP)

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