

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

December 19, 2019

The Honorable Michael R. Pompeo  
Secretary of State  
U.S. Department of State  
2201 C Street N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20230


Dear Secretary Pompeo:

We write to express our support for ongoing efforts to secure the release of Americans held hostage or unlawfully detained in many rogue nations such as Iran, Venezuela, Cuba, Syria and others. As the administration continues to successfully craft policy and solutions, we write to express our steadfast commitment to securing the release of Gustavo Cardenas, Jose Angel Pereira, Jorge Toledo, Tomeu Vadell, Alirio Zambrano, and Jose Luis Zambrano, otherwise known as the CITGO 6, from their unjust detainment in Venezuela.

As you know, the CITGO 6 have suffered from over two years of inhumane detainment conditions and lack of due process. They have experienced significant health hardships as a direct result of their treatment by the oppressive Maduro regime and others who support them. Imprisoned in an overcrowded basement for two years with limited access to sufficient nutrition, exercise, or medical treatment, the men are reported to have suffered severe weight loss and significant physical pain. Although their recent transfer to house arrest is a promising development, we believe it is crucial the Administration maintain maximum economic and diplomatic pressure in order to secure their full release and return.

We realize there are competing equities at play in Venezuela and we strongly support the Administration's commitment to securing free and fair elections in Venezuela; however, it must be made clear to all stakeholders that American citizens must be released and not made political pawns by anyone or any group. Therefore, we urge the Administration to use every tool at its disposal to help these Americans. American national interests and citizens must come first. We will continue to support efforts to maintain diplomatic and economic pressure on the illegitimate Maduro regime in Venezuela and secure the release of the CITGO 6.

Sincerely,



---

JOHN CORNYN  
United States Senator



---

TED CRUZ  
United States Senator

*Bill Cassidy, M.D.*

---

BILL CASSIDY, M.D.  
United States Senator

*John Kennedy*

---

JOHN KENNEDY  
United States Senator

*Thom Tillis*

---

THOM TILLIS  
United States Senator