

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

November 22, 2019

The Honorable Donald J. Trump
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Trump:

We write to urge you to take determined action to counter pervasive, ongoing censorship by the Iranian regime against the Iranian people.

In recent days, the people of Iran have launched anti-government protests across their country. As State Department spokeswoman Morgan Ortagus correctly noted, the protesters are demanding accountability and transparency, after the regime squandered the vast billions Iran received from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) to finance terrorism and military expansionism.

Officials from across the Iranian regime, including Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei and President Hassan Rouhani, have responded by threatening the protesters and unleashing security forces. Clashes between demonstrators and police have already turned deadly. Regime officials have also shut down access to the Internet across Iran to hide the extent and scope of their brutal crackdown from the Iranian people and the world.

The White House has clearly and strongly condemned "the lethal force and severe communications restrictions used against demonstrators," and we call on you to use the full array of tools available to the administration to build on that condemnation.

Section 403 of the Iran Threat Reduction and Syria Human Rights Act of 2012 (ITRSHRA) (22 U.S.C. 8514b) mandates the imposition of sanctions on persons who engage in censorship with respect to Iran, specifically those who "prohibit, limit, or penalize the exercise of freedom of expression or assembly by citizens of Iran" or "limit access to print or broadcast media." It also requires the President to submit to Congress a list of such persons "as new information becomes available." The sanctions are described in the Comprehensive Iran Sanctions, Accountability, and Divestment Act of 2010 (CISADA) (22 U.S.C. 8501 et seq.), and include ineligibility for a visa to enter the United States and "the blocking of property and restrictions or prohibitions on financial transactions and the exportation and importation of property."

We ask that you –

- Expediently provide a list of the Iranian officials who are shutting down the Iranian people's access to the Internet, and impose the mandated sanctions; and
- Take all available technical measures to restore access to the Internet in Iran.

As always, we stand ready to provide the administration the resources necessary to implement these measures, and to impose additional pressure against the Iranian regime and its officials for their violence inside and outside Iran.

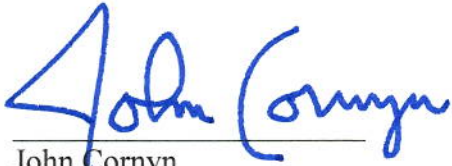
Sincerely,



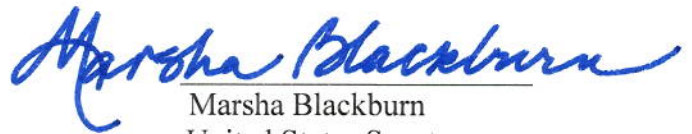
Ted Cruz
United States Senator



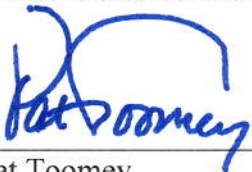
Tom Cotton
United States Senator



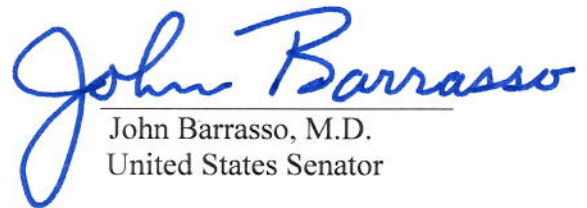
John Cornyn
United States Senator



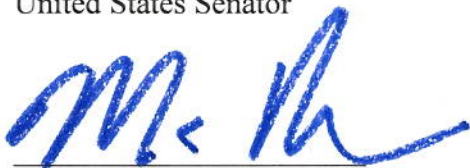
Marsha Blackburn
United States Senator



Pat Toomey
United States Senator



John Barrasso, M.D.
United States Senator



Marco Rubio
United States Senator

CC:

The Honorable Michael Pompeo, Secretary of State
The Honorable Steven T. Mnuchin, Secretary of the Treasury
The Honorable Wilbur Ross, Secretary of Commerce
The Honorable Grant Turner, Chief Executive Officer of U.S. Agency for Global Media