

March 23, 2026

The Honorable Brian Mast
Chairman
House Foreign Affairs Committee
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Gregory Meeks
Ranking Member
House Foreign Affairs Committee
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Re: Request for Markup – Iran Internet Freedom and Human Rights Legislation (H.R. 6469, H.R.7622, and H.R.7380)

Dear Chairman Mast and Ranking Member Meeks,

We, the undersigned individuals representing a broad range of missions and priorities, write to express our strong support for three complementary bipartisan measures: the **FREEDOM Act (H.R. 6469)**, the **Iran Human Rights, Internet Freedom, and Accountability Act (H.R.7622)**, and the **Internet Reach and Access Now (IRAN) Act (H.R.7380)**. We respectfully urge the House Foreign Affairs Committee to expeditiously mark these bills up as a comprehensive package to advance internet freedom, human rights, and transparency for the Iranian people.

In early January, the Iranian regime imposed a nationwide internet blackout that enabled an unprecedented and lethal crackdown on civilian protesters, shielding violent repression from international scrutiny. Credible reports suggest that the blackouts enabled the regime's mass killing of tens of thousands of Iranians over a two-day period alone. Internet shutdowns have become one of the regime's most powerful tools of repression – facilitating violence, mass arrests, and grave human rights abuses while preventing Iranians from communicating with one another and the outside world. More recently, the regime has again imposed widespread internet disruptions during this current period of conflict, further cutting off critical lines of communication between the Iranian people and the global community.

The Feasibility Review of Emerging Equipment for Digital Open Media (FREEDOM) Act, introduced by Representatives Dave Min (D-CA) and Claudia Tenney (R-NY), would require the Secretary of State, in consultation with the FCC and Treasury Department, to submit a report to Congress within 120 days updating a prior strategy on internet freedom in Iran. The report must assess the feasibility of using direct-to-cell satellite technologies to expand internet access for Iranians, analyze threats like drone-based platforms and signal jamming, and survey telecom providers operating in Iran.

The Iran Human Rights, Internet Freedom, and Accountability Act, introduced by Representatives Mike Lawler (R-NY) and Brad Sherman (D-CA), builds on the bipartisan FREEDOM Act. The legislation strengthens U.S. support for the Iranian people by expanding internet freedom programs, requiring feasibility assessments of satellite and direct-to-cell technologies that could help maintain connectivity during shutdowns, and extending the Iran Internet Freedom Grant Program through FY2030. It also directs the Defense Innovation Unit to develop technologies capable of overcoming internet shutdowns while supporting independent Iranian media, civil society, and accountability for censorship and human rights abuses.

The Internet Reach and Access Now (IRAN) Act, introduced by Representatives Eric Swalwell (D-CA), Claudia Tenney (R-NY), Yassamin Ansari (D-AZ), Maria Salazar (R-FL), Dave Min (D-CA), and Stephanie Bice (R-OK), focuses on strengthening implementation and coordination across the U.S.

government to expand secure connectivity for the Iranian people. The bill directs the Department of State to lead a whole-of-government strategy to promote internet freedom in Iran, expands access to secure connectivity tools such as VPN and direct-to-cell technologies, protects satellite communications coverage from intentional disruption, and supports cybersecurity training and digital safety tools for Iranian civil society.

These three bills address complementary aspects of internet repression in Iran. Together, they form a comprehensive bipartisan response to internet shutdowns and censorship in Iran. Ensuring that Iranians can access independent information and communicate securely advances both fundamental human rights and U.S. national interests by promoting transparency, accountability, and the free flow of information in one of the world's most heavily censored environments.

We respectfully urge the Committee to markup these bills at the earliest opportunity and advance them together as a comprehensive legislative package to send a clear message of support to the Iranian people and signal to this regime that the United States will not tolerate its abuses.

We appreciate the Committee's leadership on these issues and stand ready to support efforts to advance these important measures.

Sincerely,

Morad Ghorban

Director of Government Affairs & Policy
Public Affairs Alliance Iranian Americans

Nick Stewart

Managing Director of Advocacy
FDD Action

Andrew Ghalili

Policy Director
National Union for Democracy in Iran

Hadi Ghaemi

Executive Director
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Benham Ben Talebu

Iran Program Senior Director & Senior Fellow
Foundations for Defense of Democracies

Carrie Fillipetti

Former Deputy Assistant Secretary of State
Vandenberg Coalition

Evan Firoozi

Executive Director
NetFreedom Pioneers

Michael Hull

President
Psiphon

Adam Fisk

President
Brave New Software Lantern

Goli Ameri

Former Assistant Secretary of State,
U.S. Representative to the 60th Session of the
United Nations General Assembly

Payam Saljoughian

President
Iranian American Bar Association (IABA)

Joel Rubin

Former Deputy Assistant Secretary of State

CC: The Honorable Mike Lawler, Chairman
Subcommittee on the Middle East and North Africa
House Foreign Affairs Committee

The Honorable Brad Sherman, Ranking Member
Subcommittee on the Middle East and North Africa
House Foreign Affairs Committee