



IABA RESOURCE:

IRAN HUMAN RIGHTS,
INTERNET FREEDOM, AND
ACCOUNTABILITY ACT

MARCH 4, 2026



INTRODUCTION

Congress recently introduced the **Iran Human Rights, Internet Freedom, and Accountability Act of 2026 (H.R. 7622 / S. 3900)**, which is bipartisan legislation intended to support the Iranian people’s pursuit of human rights, expand access to uncensored communications, and strengthen accountability for officials and entities involved in censorship and other human rights violations. This legislation responds to longstanding concerns regarding censorship, internet shutdowns, corruption, and violent crackdowns on peaceful protests in Iran.

The proposed bill states that it is U.S. policy to recognize the right of the Iranian people to determine their political future through free and fair elections, expand access to communications technologies, and enforce sanctions against individuals responsible for human rights abuses.



PURPOSE AND CONGRESSIONAL FINDINGS

Congress acknowledges that the Iranian people have faced decades of repression under the Islamic Republic, including restrictions on civil liberties, censorship, and violent responses to peaceful protests. Authorities have repeatedly restricted internet access and communications platforms during periods of unrest. This has limited the ability of citizens, journalists, and civil society organizations to share information and document abuses.

- Peaceful protests have repeatedly been met with arrests, violence, and intimidation by security forces.
- The Iranian government frequently restricts or shuts down internet access to suppress dissent and conceal human rights abuses.
- Civil society activists, journalists, and protesters face systematic censorship and surveillance.



In response and through this proposed legislation, Congress states that it is the policy of the United States to:

- Support the Iranian people’s right to determine their political future through free and fair elections.
- Expand access to uncensored communications technologies for individuals inside Iran.
- Hold individuals and entities responsible for human rights abuses accountable.
- Increase transparency regarding corruption and financial networks connected to Iranian officials.



EXPANDING INTERNET FREEDOM AND ACCESS TO COMMUNICATIONS

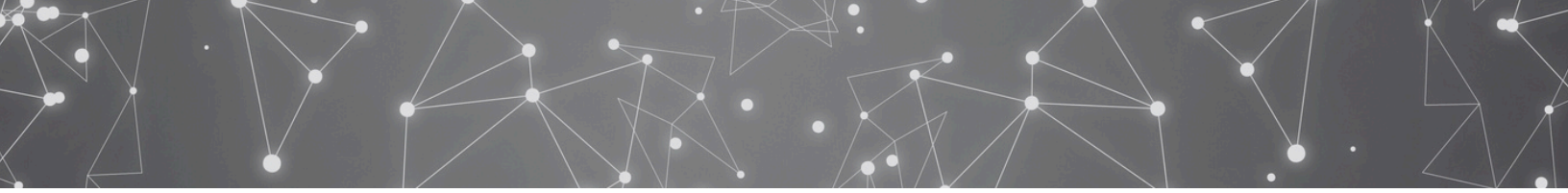
The legislation updates the United States' Iran Internet Freedom Strategy¹ and requires additional analysis of emerging technologies that could help Iranians access communications during government-imposed shutdowns.

The updated strategy must examine issues including:

- The feasibility of direct-to-cell satellite communications technologies.
- The impact of signal jamming, drones, and other countermeasures.
- The structure of telecommunications providers operating in Iran and their ownership relationships with the state.

The bill also expands support for programs that fund technologies to enable secure communications and help the

¹ 22 U.S.C. § 8754a – Strategy and grant program to promote internet freedom in Iran.



Iranian people bypass censorship. It further directs the Defense Innovation Unit to develop technologies capable of maintaining connectivity during shutdowns and to report to Congress on progress in developing and deploying these capabilities.

To support these efforts, the legislation would authorize **\$30 million annually from Fiscal Year 2027 through Fiscal Year 2030** for internet freedom programs focused on Iran.

The bill further directs the Defense Innovation Unit to support the development of technologies capable of maintaining connectivity during shutdowns, including:

- Low-Earth-orbit satellite communications.
- Mesh networking technologies.
- Portable communications systems.
- Virtual private networks and other circumvention tools.



ANTI-CORRUPTION AND FINANCIAL TRANSPARENCY

The legislation requires the Department of the Treasury to prepare a report identifying senior Iranian political figures, oligarchs, and parastatal entities connected to the Iranian Government.

The report must analyze:

- Estimated wealth and financial holdings of senior Iranian officials.
- Sources of income for officials and their immediate family members.
- Business networks and entities affiliated with senior Iranian officials.
- Exposure of U.S. financial sectors to Iranian regime-linked actors.

The report must also evaluate the potential effects of designating these individuals or entities for sanctions.



IRAN KLEPTOCRACY INITIATIVE

The bill establishes an Iran Kleptocracy Initiative within the Treasury Department's Financial Crimes Enforcement Network (FinCEN).

The initiative is tasked with investigating and exposing corruption and financial crimes linked to Iranian officials and regime-connected networks.

Responsibilities include:

- Identifying assets tied to Iranian officials and associated oligarchs.
- Coordinating with international partners to freeze or seize illicit assets.
- Supporting enforcement actions related to money laundering and corruption.
- Publishing reports and case studies related to corruption within the Iranian government and affiliated networks.

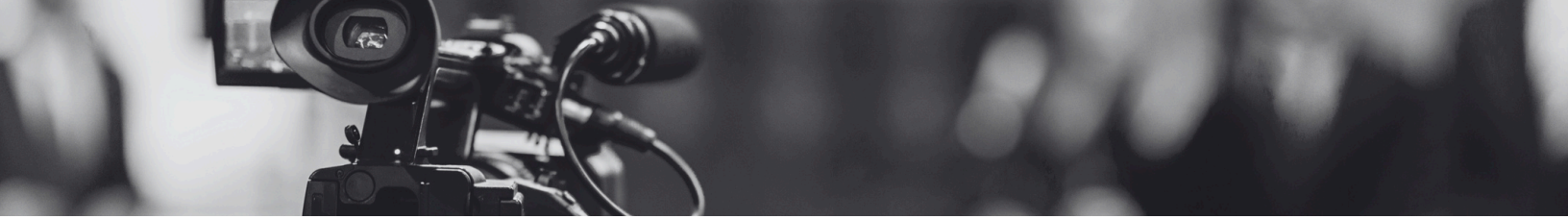
ACCOUNTABILITY FOR ENABLERS OF REPRESSION

The legislation also strengthens mechanisms for identifying and sanctioning foreign individuals or companies that materially support repression in Iran.

Covered conduct may include providing:

- Surveillance technologies
- Censorship tools
- Technologies enabling internet shutdowns
- Other assistance that facilitates human rights abuses.

Upon request from relevant congressional committees, the executive branch must determine whether such actors meet the criteria for sanctions under existing U.S. regulations addressing Iranian human rights abuses.

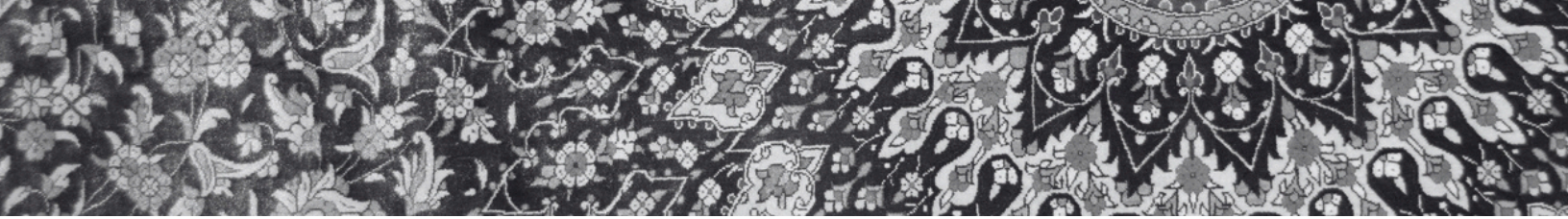


SUPPORT FOR INDEPENDENT MEDIA AND HUMAN RIGHTS DOCUMENTATION

The bill expresses Congress's view that U.S. policy should support broadcasting and media initiatives that provide uncensored information to audiences in Iran.

This includes support for:

- Independent journalists and media outlets
- Human rights documentation efforts
- Programs that expand access to accurate, uncensored, and unbiased news coverage.



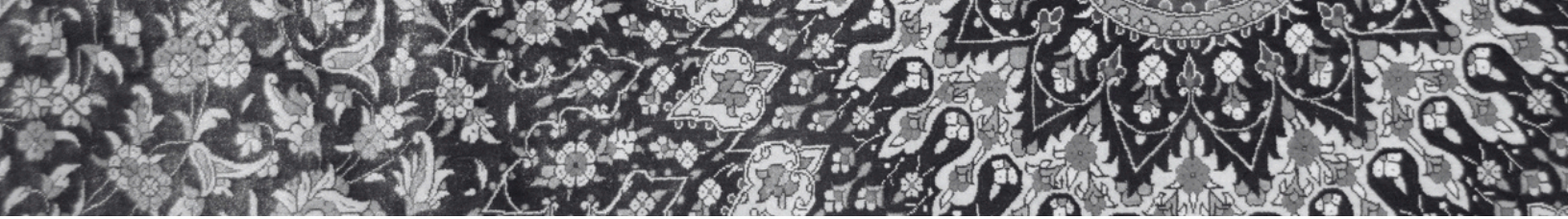
CURRENT IMPORTANCE FOR IRAN

The issues addressed in this legislation remain highly relevant in light of ongoing repression, censorship, and economic corruption within Iran.

The Iranian government has repeatedly used internet restrictions and surveillance technologies to suppress protests and control the flow of information.² During periods of unrest, authorities have blocked social media platforms, throttled internet speeds, and imposed nationwide shutdowns, making it difficult for citizens to communicate, organize, or share information with the outside world. These restrictions have also made it harder for journalists, human rights organizations, and the international community to document abuses.

At the same time, concerns about corruption and the concentration of wealth among senior regime officials remain

² U.S. Congress. FREEDOM Act of 2025, H.R. 6469, 119th Cong. (2025), <https://www.congress.gov/bill/119th-congress/house-bill/6469>



widespread. Analysts and investigative reporting have long highlighted the role of state-linked and parastatal entities in controlling significant sectors of Iran's economy. Greater transparency regarding these financial networks is an important step toward accountability.

Internet restrictions and shutdowns have become a recurring feature of government responses to protests in Iran, limiting the ability of citizens, journalists, and civil society organizations to communicate and document events. At the same time, analysts and investigative reporting have raised concerns about opaque financial networks and the concentration of wealth among senior Iranian officials and government-linked entities. The legislation addresses these issues by supporting technologies that help maintain communications access during shutdowns, increasing scrutiny of financial networks connected to Iranian officials, and strengthening sanctions authorities related to censorship and human rights abuses.

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