

115TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. RES. _____

Supporting the right of all Iranian citizens to have their voices heard.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

Mr. CORKER (for himself, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. RUBIO, and Mr. MENENDEZ) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on _____

RESOLUTION

Supporting the right of all Iranian citizens to have their voices heard.

Whereas, on December 28, 2017, Iranian citizens initiated protests objecting to the system of entrenched corruption and impoverishment in Iran, as well as the Government of Iran's foreign policy of supporting terrorism;

Whereas these protests began in the city of Mashhad and rapidly spread throughout urban and rural populations across Iran;

Whereas these protests constitute the most significant anti-government protests in Iran since June 2009;

Whereas reports indicate that Iranian citizens have expressed numerous economic grievances, including the regime's

widespread corruption and investment of resources in regional conflicts;

Whereas reports indicate that many hundreds of Iranians have been arrested and dozens killed in connection with the protests;

Whereas the Government of Iran has shut down mobile internet access and is working to block access to social media applications used to organize and publicize the protests;

Whereas online social networking and information sharing sites such as Telegram, Instagram, and Twitter have been blocked;

Whereas the Government of Iran has routinely violated the human rights of its citizens, including ongoing, systematic, and serious restrictions of freedom of peaceful assembly and association and freedom of opinion and expression, including the continuing closures of media outlets, arrests of journalists, and the censorship of expression in online forums such as blogs and websites;

Whereas the 2016 Department of State Human Rights Report on Iran noted “severe restrictions on civil liberties, including the freedoms of assembly, association, speech, religion, and press. Other human rights problems included abuse of due process combined with use of capital punishment for crimes that do not meet the requirements of due process, as well as cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment; and disregard for the physical integrity of persons, whom authorities arbitrarily and unlawfully detained, tortured, or killed.”;

Whereas the Government of Iran has previously responded to protests with a concerted campaign of intimidation, re-

pression, and violence, including human rights abuses against Iranian citizens;

Whereas the Government of Iran continues to operate with hostility and impunity toward journalists, reformers, ethnic and religious minorities, political opponents, human rights defenders, women’s rights groups, student activists, and others, including through unlawful and arbitrary detentions, arrests, politically motivated sentencing, physical assaults, and killings; and

Whereas, on December 29, 2017, the Department of State strongly condemned the arrest of peaceful protesters and noted, “Iran’s leaders have turned a wealthy country with a rich history and culture into an economically depleted rogue state whose chief exports are violence, bloodshed, and chaos.”: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the Senate—

2 (1) supports the right of all Iranian citizens,
3 many of whom braved the persistent and pervasive
4 threat of censorship, arrest, physical harassment,
5 and death, to have their voices heard;

6 (2) calls on the Government of Iran to respect
7 the rights of the people of Iran to freedom of speech,
8 press, religion, association, and assembly;

9 (3) condemns the Government of Iran’s per-
10 sistent human rights violations;

11 (4) warns the Government of Iran against any
12 violence or retribution targeting peaceful protestors;

1 (5) objects to acts of censorship, intimidation,
2 and other restrictions on freedom of the press, free-
3 dom of speech, and freedom of expression in Iran;

4 (6) encourages the President, the Secretary of
5 State, and the United States Ambassador to the
6 United Nations to work to convene emergency ses-
7 sions of the United Nations Security Council and
8 the United Nations Human Rights Council to con-
9 demn the ongoing human rights violations per-
10 petrated by the Government of Iran and establish a
11 monitoring mechanism by which the Council can
12 monitor such violations;

13 (7) calls on the Government of Iran to cooper-
14 ate with and allow visits of the United Nations Spe-
15 cial Rapporteurs for Human Rights and the United
16 Nations Office of the High Commissioner for
17 Human Rights; and

18 (8) urges the President and Secretary of State
19 to work with the international community to ensure
20 that violations of human rights are part of all formal
21 and informal multilateral or bilateral discussions
22 with and regarding Iran.