

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

February 12, 2013

The Honorable John F. Kerry  
Secretary of State  
U.S. Department of State  
2201 C Street NW  
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Secretary Kerry:

We write to thank you for your recent statement calling for the release of American citizen Saeed Abedini and we respectfully urge you to exhaust every possible option to secure Mr. Abedini's immediate release.

We support your assessment that Mr. Abedini's imprisonment represents a "violation of the universal right of freedom of religion." We were also heartened by the State Department's recent condemnation of the imprisonment and trial of Mr. Abedini.

While there are countless important issues that come before you, few are more sacred than defending the most fundamental human rights. It is even more incumbent upon us to stand against persecution when it is levied against our own citizens. As an American citizen, Mr. Abedini deserves nothing less than the exercising of every diplomatic tool of the U.S. government to defend his basic human rights.

Mr. Abedini was detained by the Iranian Revolutionary Guard on July 28, 2012, during a lawful entry into Iran. Mr. Abedini's detention occurred during his ninth trip to Iran since 2009. His frequent travel to Iran was for the humanitarian purpose of opening an orphanage in Rasht, Iran – an endeavor the Iranian Regime encouraged and supported. During his most recent trip to Iran, Mr. Abedini's passports were confiscated and he was forced to remain in Iran and face charges relating to his Christian faith. On September 26, 2012, the Revolutionary Guard raided the home of Mr. Abedini's parents and took Mr. Abedini into custody. In the following months, Mr. Abedini experienced solitary confinement, beatings, and aggressive interrogations in Evin Prison.

On January 21, 2013, Mr. Abedini stood trial in front one of the most notorious judges in Iran: Judge Pir-Abassi of Branch 26 of the Revolutionary Court. Judge Pir-Abassi is known as the "hanging judge" and has been designated by the European Union for numerous violations committed during trials of human rights activists related to the 2009 Iranian elections. It is deeply disturbing that the human rights of an American citizen were decided by an Iranian judge of this repute.

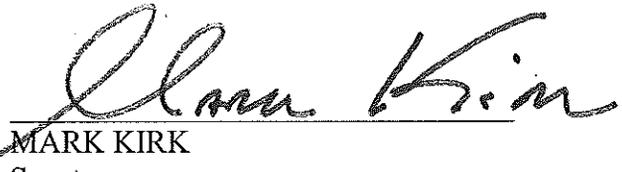
Every American citizen traveling or living abroad should have the assurance that the U.S. government will come vigorously to his or her defense if they are unjustly detained or imprisoned. We respectfully request that you continue to use every diplomatic avenue possible, in cooperation with our allies and the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran, to secure Mr. Abedini's unconditional release and personally and publically condemn his arbitrary detention in a statement.

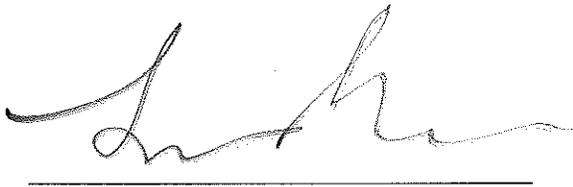
Sincerely,

  
TRENT FRANKS  
Member of Congress

  
HENRY WAXMAN  
Member of Congress

  
FRANK R. LAUTENBERG  
Senator

  
MARK KIRK  
Senator

  
LINDSEY GRAHAM  
Senator

  
RON WYDEN  
Senator

  
ROY BLUNT  
Senator

  
DEAN HELLER  
Senator

  
PAT ROBERTS  
Senator

  
BENJAMIN J. CARDIN  
Senator

  
MIKE JOHANN'S  
Senator

  
DEB FISCHER  
Senator

Jerry Moran

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JERRY MORAN  
Senator

John Boozman

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JOHN BOOZMAN  
Senator

James E. Risch

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JAMES E. RISCH  
Senator

Mike Crapo

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MIKE CRAPO  
Senator

Barbara Mikulski

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BARBARA MIKULSKI  
Senator

Mary Landrieu

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MARY LANDRIEU  
Senator

Jeff Sessions

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JEFF SESSIONS  
Senator

Kelly Ayotte

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KELLY AYOTTE  
Senator

Richard Burr

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RICHARD BURR  
Senator

Ted Cruz

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TED CRUZ  
Senator

Rob Portman

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ROB PORTMAN  
Senator

Tim Kaine

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TIM KAINE  
Senator

James P. McGovern

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JAMES P. MCGOVERN  
Member of Congress

Adam Smith

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ADAM SMITH  
Member of Congress



JOE PITTS  
Member of Congress



JIM MORAN  
Member of Congress



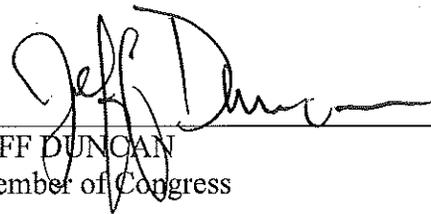
FRANK WOLF  
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THEODORE E. DEUTCH  
Member of Congress



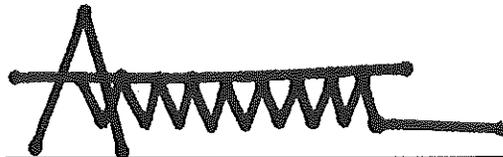
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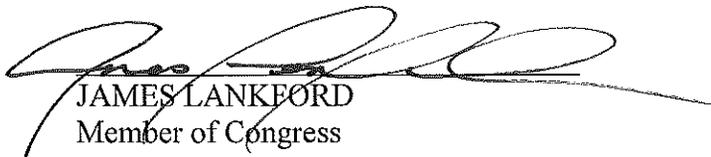
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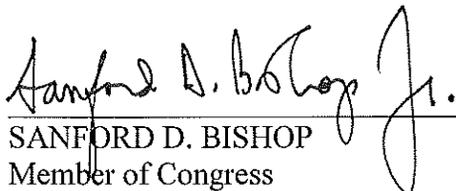
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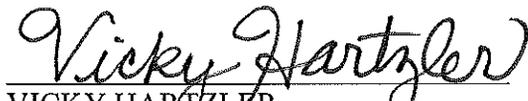
  
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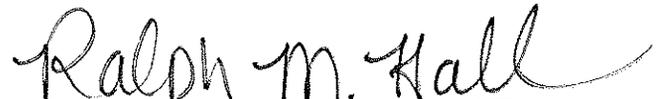
  
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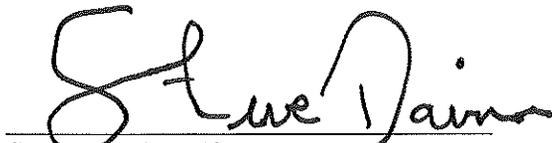
  
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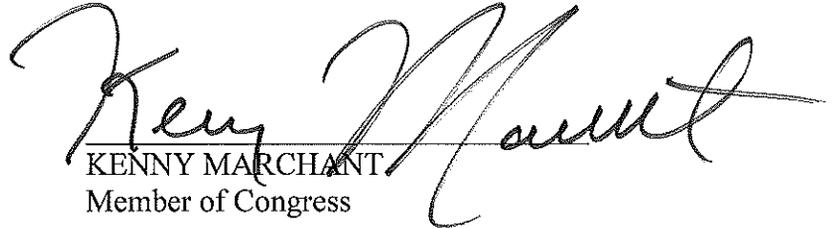
  
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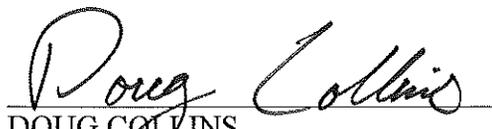
  
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DAVID SCHWEIKERT  
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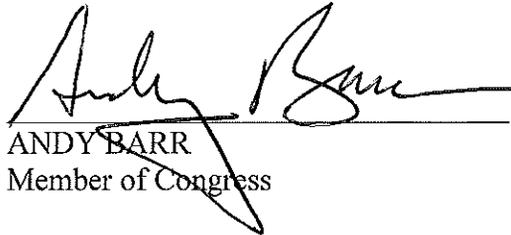
  
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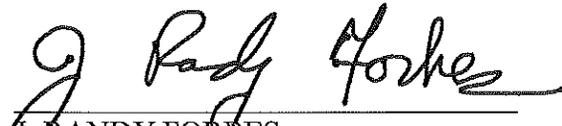
  
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GUS BILIRAKIS  
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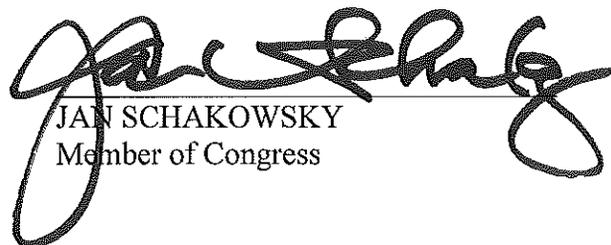
  
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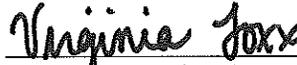
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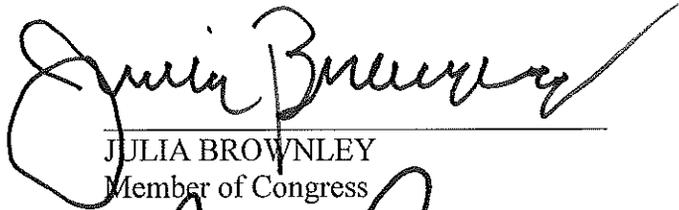
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VIRGINIA FOXX  
Member of Congress



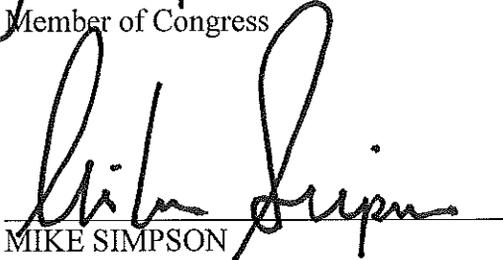
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JULIA BROWNLEY  
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JOHN FLEMING  
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MIKE SIMPSON  
Member of Congress



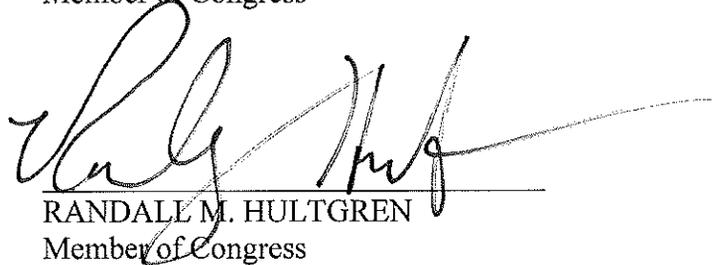
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Member of Congress



GRACE MENG  
Member of Congress



STEVEN PALAZZO  
Member of Congress



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CHRIS STEWART  
Member of Congress



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RANDY WEBER  
Member of Congress



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BILL HUIZENGA  
Member of Congress



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MIKE POMPEO  
Member of Congress