

119TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. RES. _____

Condemning the Government of Iran's state-sponsored persecution of the Baha'i minority and its continued violation of the International Covenants on Human Rights.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

Mr. WYDEN (for himself, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. HICKENLOOPER, Mr. KAINE, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. BOOKER, Ms. ROSEN, Mr. COONS, Mr. WELCH, Ms. WARREN, Ms. HASSAN, Mrs. FISCHER, Mr. CRAPO, and Mr. MURPHY) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on _____

RESOLUTION

Condemning the Government of Iran's state-sponsored persecution of the Baha'i minority and its continued violation of the International Covenants on Human Rights.

Whereas, in 1982, 1984, 1988, 1990, 1992, 1993, 1994, 1996, 2000, 2004, 2006, 2008, 2009, 2012, 2013, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2020, 2022, and 2024, Congress declared that it deplored the religious persecution by the Government of Iran of the Baha'i community and would hold the Government of Iran responsible for upholding the rights of all Iranian nationals, including members of the Baha'i faith;

Whereas, since 1979, Iranian authorities have killed or executed more than 200 Baha'i leaders and more than 10,000 Baha'is have been dismissed from government and university jobs;

Whereas June 18, 2025, marked the 42nd anniversary of the execution of 10 Baha'i women by the Government of Iran, each witnessing the hanging of those hanged before her in a final failed attempt to induce abandonment of their faith after over 6 months of imprisonment and violent abuse, with the youngest only 17 years old;

Whereas, on December 17, 2024, the United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution (A/RES/79/183) criticizing Iran for human rights abuses and calling on Iran to carry out wide-ranging reforms, including ending—

(1) “in law and in practice, all forms of discrimination on the basis of thought, conscience, religion, or belief, including restrictions contained in article 499 bis and article 500 bis of the Islamic Penal Code”;

(2) “escalated discrimination and violence, as well as economic restrictions, such as the closure, destruction or confiscation of businesses, land and properties, the cancellation of licenses and the denial of employment in certain public and private sectors, including government or military positions and elected office, the denial of and restrictions on access to education, including for members of the Baha'i and other religious minorities, and other human rights violations against persons belonging to recognized and unrecognized religious minorities”;

(3) “ongoing severe limitations and increasing restrictions on the right to freedom of thought, conscience, religion or belief, restrictions on the establishment of

places of worship, undue restrictions on burials carried out in accordance with religious tenets”; and

(4) “attacks against places of worship and burial and other human rights violations, but not limited to the increased harassment, intimidation, persecution, arbitrary arrest and detention of, and incitement to hatred that leads to violence against, persons belonging to recognized and unrecognized religious minorities, including . . . in particular, Baha’is”;

Whereas, in the 2024 Annual Report of the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom issued in May 2024, it is reported that in 2023—

(1) “The government [of Iran] has targeted Baha’i women in particular, including 10 arrested in Isfahan in October. Approximately two-thirds of Iranian Baha’i prisoners are women, including Mahvash Sabet and Fariba Kamalabadi, members of Iran’s former Baha’i leadership (Yaran-e-Iran). Both are serving a decade in prison after having previously served an identical sentence in the early 2010s.”; and

(2) “Authorities also targeted Baha’i cemeteries in Arak, Alborz, and Golestan. Local municipalities seized and confiscated Baha’i land, restricted Baha’i access to burial grounds, and declared intentions to sell Baha’i-owned property exclusively to Muslims.”;

Whereas, in response to a surge in persecution of Baha’i women by the Government of Iran between 2022 and 2024, on July 31, 2024, 18 United Nations Special Rapporteurs and United Nations Working Group experts released a joint letter of allegations concerning the increase “in the systematic targeting of Baha’i women, including through arrests, summoning for interrogation,

enforced disappearance, raids on their homes and confiscation of their personal belongings” and reported that—

(1) “Since early March 2024 alone, 72 of 93 Baha’is summoned to court or prison, more than three-quarters, have been women.”; and

(2) “Baha’i women face intersectional persecution: as women and as members of the Baha’i religious minority. The escalation comes as Baha’i women continue to be confronted with ongoing incidents of persecution faced by all Baha’is, including denial of higher education and economic and cultural restrictions, which spans their entire lives, impacting them intellectually, socially and economically as they are banned from university and public employment only for their faith.”;

Whereas the Iran section of the Department of State’s 2023 Report on International Religious Freedom issued in May 2024 provides, in part—

(1) “Human Rights Activists News Agency (HRANA) said the majority of human rights violations against religious minorities involved Baha’is (85 percent).”;

(2) “The NGO Human Rights Without Frontiers (HRWF) reported more than 1,000 Baha’is were either imprisoned, in custody, under arrest, or waiting for a hearing or to be summoned by a court.”; and

(3) “A Ministry of Science, Research, and Technology order requires universities to exclude Baha’is from access to higher education, or to expel them if their religious affiliation becomes known.”;

Whereas, on April 1, 2024, Human Rights Watch issued a report titled, “‘The Boot on My Neck’: Iranian Authori-

ties’ Crime of Persecution Against Baha’is in Iran”, which detailed that—

(1) “For the past four decades, the authorities’ serial violations of Baha’is’ rights have continued, directed by the state’s most senior officials and the Islamic Republic’s ideology, which holds extreme animus against adherents of the Baha’i faith. While the intensity of violations against Baha’is has varied over time, the authorities’ persecution of people who are members of this faith community has remained constant, impacting virtually every aspect of Baha’is’ private and public lives.”;

(2) “The Islamic Republic’s repression of Baha’is, particularly after 1979, is enshrined in Iranian law and is official government policy.”; and

(3) “Human Rights Watch believes that the cumulative impact of authorities’ decades-long systematic repression is an intentional and severe deprivation of Baha’is’ fundamental rights and amounts to the crime against humanity of persecution.”;

Whereas, on July 17, 2024, Mr. Javaid Rehman, the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran issued a special report titled, “Atrocity Crimes and grave violations of human rights committed by the Islamic Republic of Iran (1981–1982 and 1988)”, which concluded, “Having considered the various submissions and the available documentation and having examined the treatment meted out to the Bahá’í community in the early years of the Revolution, the Special Rapporteur reports that Iranian authorities—with destructive, arguably genocidal intent—engaged in killing or colluded in the killings of members of the Bahá’í community; Bahá’ís were physically and mentally tortured simply because of their faith and members of the commu-

nity suffered from ‘serious bodily or mental harm.’ They also faced confiscation of their properties, expulsion from employment and denial of education rights.”;

Whereas Iran is a member of the United Nations and a signatory to both the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, among other international human rights treaties, without reservation;

Whereas section 105 of the Comprehensive Iran Sanctions, Accountability, and Divestment Act of 2010 (22 U.S.C. 8514) authorizes the President to impose sanctions on individuals who are “responsible for or complicit in, or responsible for ordering, controlling, or otherwise directing, the commission of serious human rights abuses against citizens of Iran or their family members on or after June 12, 2009”; and

Whereas the Iran Threat Reduction and Syria Human Rights Act of 2012 (Public Law 112–158) amends and expands the authorities established under the Comprehensive Iran Sanctions, Accountability, and Divestment Act of 2010 (Public Law 111–195) to sanction Iranian human rights abusers: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the Senate—

2 (1) condemns the Government of Iran’s state-
3 sponsored persecution of the Baha’i minority in Iran
4 and the continued violation of the Universal Dec-
5 laration of Human Rights and the International
6 Covenant on Civil and Political Rights;

7 (2) calls on the Government of Iran—

1 (A) to immediately release the imprisoned
2 or detained Baha'is and all other prisoners held
3 solely on account of their religion;

4 (B) to end its state-sponsored campaign of
5 hate propaganda against the Baha'is; and

6 (C) to reverse state-imposed policies deny-
7 ing Baha'is and members of other religious mi-
8 norities equal opportunities to higher education,
9 earning a livelihood, due process under the law,
10 and the free exercise of religious practices;

11 (3) calls on the President and the Secretary of
12 State, in cooperation with responsible nations, to im-
13 mediately condemn the Government of Iran's contin-
14 ued violation of human rights and demand the im-
15 mediate release of prisoners held solely on account
16 of their religion; and

17 (4) urges the President and the Secretary of
18 State to utilize available authorities to impose sanc-
19 tions on officials of the Government of Iran and
20 other individuals directly responsible for serious
21 human rights abuses, including abuses against the
22 Baha'i community of Iran.