

115TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. 2528

To call on the United States and its partners to continue support for the Iranian people in their fight for freedom and prosperity.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MARCH 8, 2018

Mr. HATCH (for himself, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. LANKFORD, Ms. BALDWIN, and Mr. MANCHIN) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations

A BILL

To call on the United States and its partners to continue support for the Iranian people in their fight for freedom and prosperity.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.**

4 (a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the
5 “Continued Support for the Iranian People Act of 2018”.

6 (b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for
7 this Act is as follows:

- Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.
- Sec. 2. Findings.
- Sec. 3. Sense of Congress.
- Sec. 4. Statement of United States policy.

Sec. 5. Requirements.

Sec. 6. Appropriate congressional committees defined.

1 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

2 Congress makes the following findings:

3 (1) The protests that began on December 28,
4 2017, in Iran (in this Act referred to as “the pro-
5 tests”) were instigated and supported by a diverse
6 demographic of Iranian citizens, especially including
7 the poor and economically disenfranchised popu-
8 lations across the country, located in both rural and
9 urban areas.

10 (2) Rather than invest in the legitimate econ-
11 omy and future of the Iranian people, the Govern-
12 ment of Iran budgeted billions of dollars to continue
13 supporting illegitimate armed groups and terrorists
14 in the region, primarily through its Islamic Revolu-
15 tionary Guard Corps (IRGC).

16 (3) The Government of Iran has arrested at
17 least 4,500 individuals for participating in the pro-
18 tests, at least 490 of whom remain in custody, ac-
19 cording to news reports.

20 (4) According to Reuters, Iranian Deputy Inte-
21 rior Minister Hossein Zolfaghari stated on January
22 1, 2018, that “more than 90 percent of the people
23 arrested in these unrests were young people and

1 teenagers under the age of 25 and virtually none of
2 them have any arrest history”.

3 (5) On January 8, 2018, Hamid Shahriari, dep-
4 uty head of the Government of Iran’s judiciary, said
5 that “those who organized and led the unrest
6 against the establishment can expect the maximum
7 penalty,” according to the Iranian Students News
8 Agency (ISNA), as reported by Radio Free Europe/
9 Radio Liberty.

10 (6) Three detained prisoners were reported to
11 have “committed suicide” in Iranian prisons since
12 their incarceration, including Iranian-Canadian aca-
13 demic Kavous Seyed-Emami.

14 (7) The Iranian Security Forces have killed
15 over 20 individuals during the protests, including
16 13-year-old Armin Sadeghi.

17 (8) The Government of Iran has consistently
18 blocked Internet access and use of communications
19 applications like Telegram and Instagram. As of
20 January 31, 2018, protests continue throughout
21 Iran, with demonstrations in the city of Ahvaz on
22 January 23, 2018, and four more cities in the days
23 since.

24 **SEC. 3. SENSE OF CONGRESS.**

25 Congress—

1 (1) strongly condemns the Government of Iran
2 for its human rights violations against the people of
3 Iran during and in the wake of the protests;

4 (2) urges the President to continue to pub-
5 licly—

6 (A) condemn the Government of Iran for
7 its human rights abuses against the Iranian
8 people; and

9 (B) support the human rights, economic
10 prosperity, and democratic aspirations of the
11 Iranian people;

12 (3) reaffirms the right of the people of Iran to
13 the freedom of speech and assembly in the face of
14 oppression perpetrated by the Government of Iran;
15 and

16 (4) supports the right of the people of Iran to
17 a democratic system of governance.

18 **SEC. 4. STATEMENT OF UNITED STATES POLICY.**

19 It is the policy of the United States—

20 (1) to condemn the Government of Iran’s viola-
21 tions of its citizens’ human rights, freedom of reli-
22 gious expression, and freedom of speech, including
23 state-sanctioned violence against peaceful protestors;

(2) to support, through appropriate actions and official public statements, the people of Iran in their fight for freedom and prosperity; and

(3) to work with international allies and partners to monitor and effectively respond to the protests in Iran in a manner that supports the human rights and democratic aspirations of the people of Iran and deters the Government of Iran from committing continued acts of oppression and persecution against its citizens.

SEC. 5. REQUIREMENTS.

(a) USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA.—

(1) ARCHIVE.—The Secretary of State, in consultation with the Secretary of Commerce, shall work with relevant social media companies to build an anonymized and public comprehensive archive of all social media communications, whether successfully transmitted or blocked by the Government of Iran, to and from protesters in Iran since December 28, 2017.

(2) STRATEGY.—The Secretary of State, in consultation with the Secretary of Commerce and the Office of the Director of National Intelligence, shall work with relevant social media and telecommunications companies, Internet service pro-

1 viders, and expert public stakeholders, as appro-
2 priate, to develop a strategy consisting of potential
3 government and private sector actions and best prac-
4 tices for preventing the Government of Iran from
5 shutting down Internet access and blocking access to
6 social media applications.

7 (3) REPORT REQUIRED.—Not later than 180
8 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the
9 Secretary of State shall submit to the appropriate
10 congressional committees an unclassified report,
11 which may contain a classified annex, consisting of
12 the archive described in paragraph (1) and the strat-
13 egy described in paragraph (2).

14 (b) MODIFICATION OF ANNUAL HUMAN RIGHTS RE-
15 PORT.—

16 (1) REPORT REQUIRED.—As part of the first
17 Annual Country Report on Human Rights submitted
18 after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Sec-
19 retary of State and the Secretary of the Treasury,
20 in consultation with other appropriate Federal agen-
21 cies, shall include an unclassified report docu-
22 menting the actions of the Government of Iran, the
23 Iranian Revolutionary Court, the Iranian Revolu-
24 tionary Guard Corps, and their proxies in response
25 to the protests that began on December 28, 2017.

(2) ELEMENTS.—The report required under paragraph (1) shall include—

(A) an appendix detailing the circumstances of the incarcerations undertaken by the Government of Iran during this period and the treatment of prisoners; and

(B) an appendix, which may contain a classified annex, detailing the sources and mechanisms used by the Government of Iran, the IRGC, and its proxies to fund its actions in response to the protests.

(3) REQUIRED BRIEFING.—Not later than 60 days after the date of the enactment of this Act and upon publication of the report described in paragraph (1), the Secretary of State and the Secretary of the Treasury shall brief, in an unclassified and classified format, if necessary, the appropriate congressional committees on the information required by the report described in paragraph (1).

SEC. 6. APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES DEFINED.

In this Act, the term “appropriate congressional committees” means—

(1) the Committee on Foreign Relations, the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transpor-

1 tation, and the Committee on Appropriations of the
2 Senate; and

3 (2) the Committee on Foreign Affairs, the
4 Committee on Energy and Commerce, and the Com-
5 mittee on Appropriations of the House of Represent-
6 atives.

○