

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

September 26, 2013

The President
The White House
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. President:

America was birthed in the flames of religious persecution. Our forbearers yearned to worship in their own way, to live their lives in accordance with their own religious creed, and to pass on to their posterity the ability to do the same. Their struggle for religious liberty is one of the enduring strengths of America and we must be diligent in preserving this liberty around the world.

America must be the unwavering light of religious freedom to the world, and our stance on issues relating to religious freedom must be resounding. The undersigned Members of Congress ask you to take a more prominent role in our Nation's condemnation of Pastor Saeed Abedini's imprisonment by the Islamic Nation of Iran and make clear the call for his release.

Pastor Abedini, an American citizen, was detained by the Iranian Revolutionary Guard on July 28, 2012, during a lawful entry into Iran. Mr. Abedini's passport was confiscated and he was subsequently sentenced to eight years in prison at the notoriously brutal Evin Prison on charges of intentionally undermining the national security of Iran. The judge handed down this verdict after denying Mr. Abedini full access to his attorney, and after barring both Mr. Abedini and his attorney from the court for much of the proceedings.

Since being held in prison, Mr. Abedini has been subjected to brutal conditions and his health is suffering significantly. On March 3, 2013, Mr. Abedini was able to contact his family with complaints of possible internal bleeding from the many beatings he had suffered. From a recent discussion with Pastor Abedini's wife, we learned that he was taken to a private hospital twice, but not afforded the right to any treatment until July 20, 2013, when a physician was able to examine Mr. Abedini and prescribe medication for his injuries. The physician found a large internal wound with scar tissue in his digestive track, indicating the wound had been reopened several times.

An American citizen is being held in prison, abused, and denied basic rights, all because he is of the Christian faith, yet you have remained silent on the issue. White House Press Secretary, Jay Carney, has barely discussed Pastor Abedini, and neither time condemned Iran with a serious violation of human rights. Secretary of State John Kerry has not issued any statements condemning Iran since March, 2013. In his statements, Secretary Kerry

has only said he was "deeply concerned" and "disturbed". Your administration's near silence comes after legislation urging for Pastor Abedini's release, H.Res 147, was introduced and has garnered 65 cosponsors. This brutal and inhumane treatment requires an American response which makes clear our dedication to protecting religious freedoms around the world, especially with regards to an American citizen.

Americans, as do all people of the world, have the inalienable right to practice the religion they so choose. Mr. President, the world is waiting for you to step forward and condemn Iran for their actions, taking a stand not just for Pastor Abedini, but for religious freedom.

Sincerely,



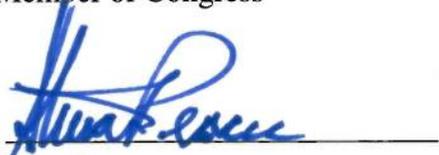
Robert Pittenger
Member of Congress



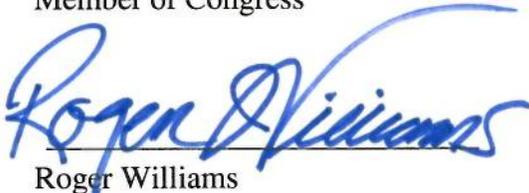
Robert B. Aderholt
Member of Congress



Lynn Westmoreland
Member of Congress



Steve Pearce
Member of Congress



Roger Williams
Member of Congress



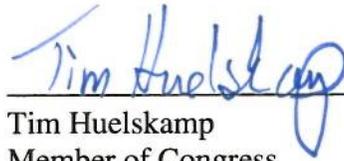
John Shimkus
Member of Congress



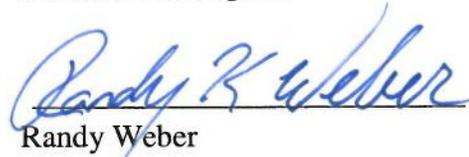
Vicky Hartzler
Member of Congress



Steve Stockman
Member of Congress



Tim Huelskamp
Member of Congress



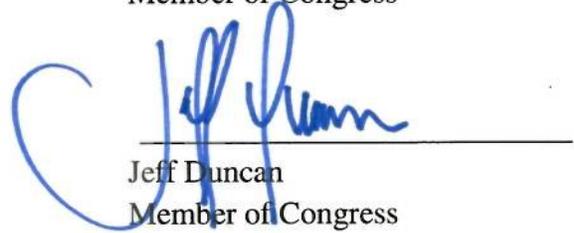
Randy Weber
Member of Congress



Lynn Jenkins
Member of Congress



Walter Jones
Member of Congress



Jeff Duncan
Member of Congress



Dana Rohrabacher
Member of Congress



Joe Pitts
Member of Congress



Marlin Stutzman
Member of Congress



Markwayne Mullin
Member of Congress



John Fleming
Member of Congress



Doug Lamborn
Member of Congress



Bill Cassidy
Member of Congress



Andy Barr
Member of Congress



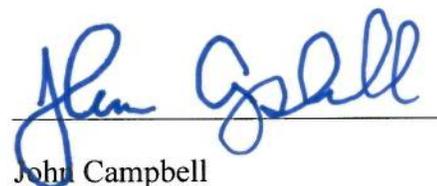
Mike McIntyre
Member of Congress



Scott Garrett
Member of Congress



Richard Hudson
Member of Congress



John Campbell
Member of Congress



Mike Pompeo
Member of Congress



Kay Granger
Member of Congress


Bill Huizenga
Member of Congress


Alan Nunnelee
Member of Congress


Randy Forbes
Member of Congress


Steve Chabot
Member of Congress


Frank Wolf
Member of Congress


Jackie Walorski
Member of Congress

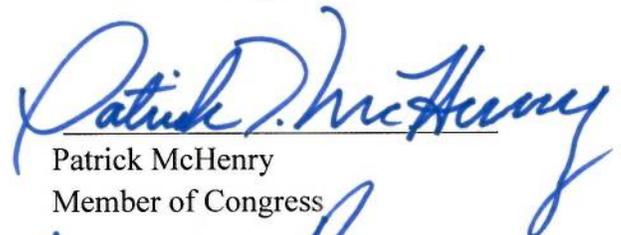

Howard Coble
Member of Congress


Tim Walberg
Member of Congress


Joe Wilson
Member of Congress


Pete Olson
Member of Congress


Todd Rokita
Member of Congress


Patrick McHenry
Member of Congress


Steve Daines
Member of Congress

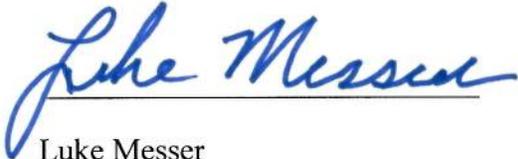

Michele Bachmann
Member of Congress



James Lankford
Member of Congress



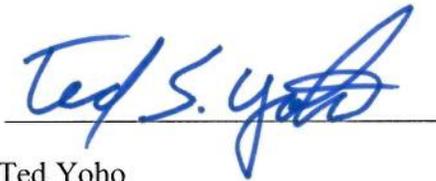
Tom Latham
Member of Congress



Luke Messer
Member of Congress



Chris Stewart
Member of Congress



Ted Yoho
Member of Congress



Rich Nugent
Member of Congress



Bob Gibbs
Member of Congress



Kevin Cramer
Member of Congress



Kay Granger
Member of Congress

Handwritten signature of Bob Latta in blue ink, featuring a stylized 'L' and 'A'.

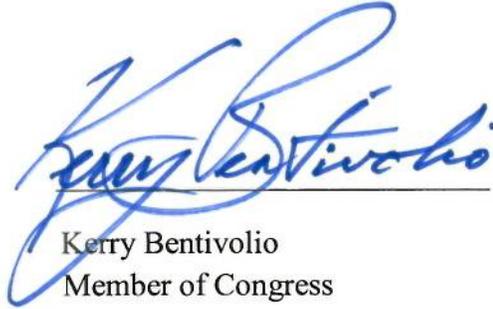
Bob Latta
Member of Congress

Handwritten signature of Trent Franks in blue ink, with a prominent 'F' and 'T'.

Trent Franks
Member of Congress

Handwritten signature of Dan Benishek in blue ink, including the district number 'MT-01' at the end.

Dan Benishek
Member of Congress

Handwritten signature of Kerry Bentivolio in blue ink, with a large, flowing 'K' and 'B'.

Kerry Bentivolio
Member of Congress



Joe Barton
Member of Congress



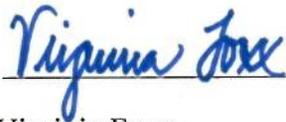
Louie Gohmert
Member of Congress



Jeff Miller
Member of Congress



Rodney Davis
Member of Congress



Virginia Foxx
Member of Congress



Randy Neugebauer
Member of Congress



Brad Wenstrup
Member of Congress



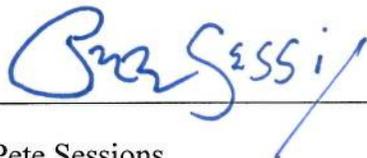
David Schweikert
Member of Congress



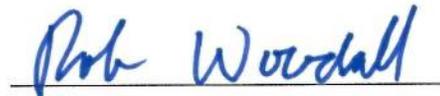
Rob Wittman
Member of Congress



Glenn Thompson
Member of Congress



Pete Sessions
Member of Congress



Rob Woodall
Member of Congress



Tom Graves
Member of Congress



Tom Rice
Member of Congress



Susan Brooks
Member of Congress



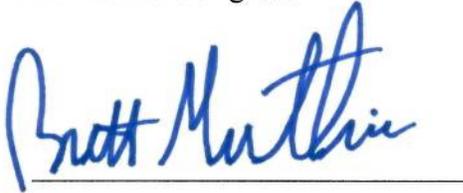
John Carter
Member of Congress



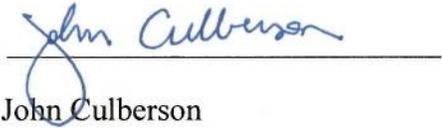
Jeb Hensarling
Member of Congress



Ron DeSantis
Member of Congress



Brett Guthrie
Member of Congress



John Culberson
Member of Congress